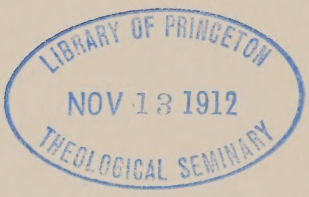
THE CALL OF THE CARPENTER

BOUCK WHITE



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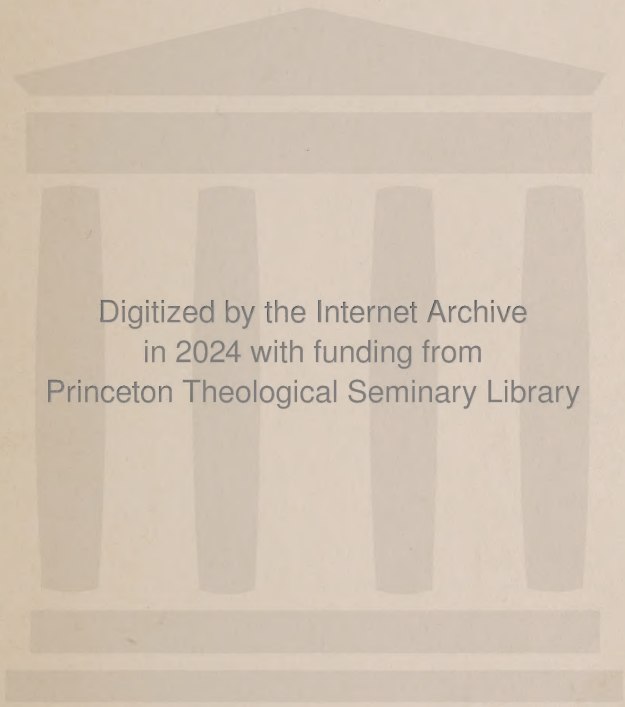
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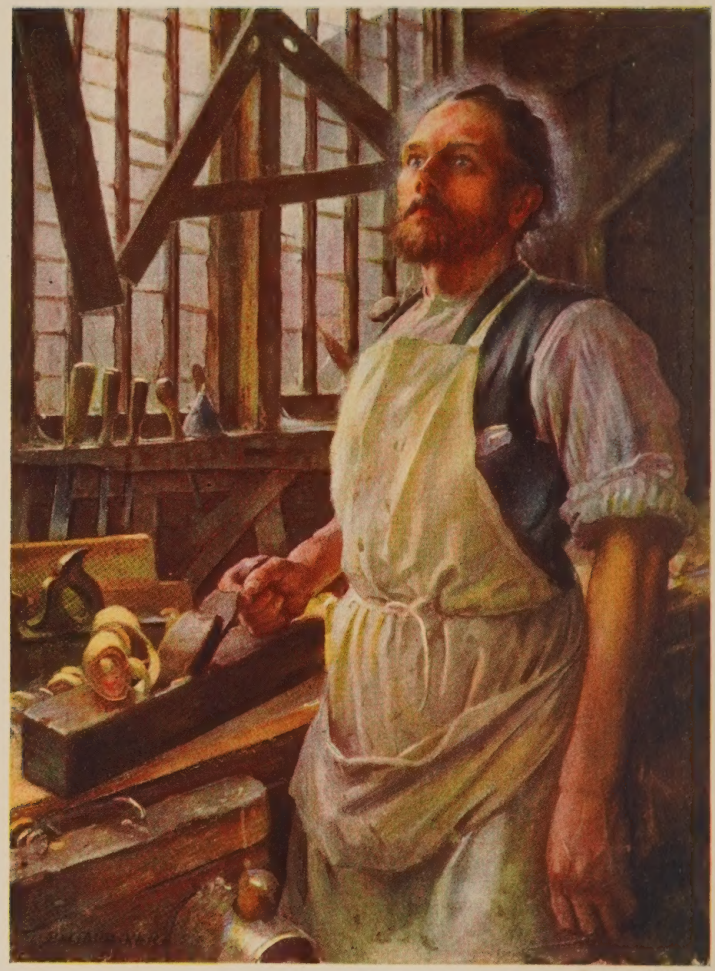
THE CALL OF THE CARPENTER



'THE CARPENTER OF NAZARETH WAS 'A WORKMAN THAT NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED.'"

THE CALL OF THE CARPENTER

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BY

BOUCK WHITE

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1912

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TO

GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY

FOLLOWER OF THE WORKINGMAN HERE TOLD OF

THE POSTURE OF AFFAIRS

THERE are two facts of our day which occupy the centre of the stage, to which all other facts are tributary, and which for good or for ill are conceded to be of superlative import. They are, the rise of democracy, and the decline of ecclesiasticism.

As to the former, little more need be said than that it is a tidal movement — is so admitted even by its enemies. Democracy cannot be demarcated as a current in the midst of the waters. It is a ground swell moving the entire mass of the waters. The rising tide is reaching into every bay and inlet. Education, commerce, industry, art, letters, statecraft, are feeling the presence of a new spirit in the world. It is not localized — no metes or bounds to it. It is imperturbably unaware of racial or national lines. America is committed to it with an organic and complete committal. France has launched herself on these waters and is lapped in its waves. England is in the throes; to worriment over it is attributed the recent death of her king. Germany, Russia, Spain, Italy, tell the same tale. Turkey, Portugal, Japan are awakening. Persia, China, Egypt, India are rubbing sleep from their eyes. Quietly as the march of the stars, and as irresistible, the coronation of the common people is drawing nigh. Almost with literal exactness can one apply to it words of a singer of former time:

The earth is democracy's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. Day unto day uttereth speech of it, night unto night showeth knowledge concerning it. There is no speech nor language to-day where its voice is not heard. Its line is gone out through all the earth, and its word to the end of the world.

Imperious is the demand of the people for a controlling voice in their destinies. The disinherited classes are refusing to remain disinherited. Every device within the wit of man has been sought to keep them down. And the devices have come to naught. Their efforts to throw off the oppressor have not always been wise, but they have always been noble. Too often in these insurgencies they have but bruised their heads against the brass dungeon roof above them. But it bespeaks a something of nobleness in man to dash his skull against the bars that imprison him. Unsane, inarticulate, the democracy hitherto has had its dwelling among the tombs; and no man has been able to tame it, no, not with chains; because that it has been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains have been plucked asunder by it, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither has any man been able to tame it; and always, night and day, it has been in the tombs, crying and cutting itself with stones.

As to the other pivotal fact of our day, the decline of ecclesiasticism, proofs are equally abundant. Witnesses, representing all branches of the Church, enter the box. And something like the following is their testimony: "If the gain of the Church on the population during the

first half of the century is represented by 80, during the last half it is represented by 20, during the last twenty years it is represented by 4, and during the last ten years it is represented by 0." "The Anglican Church finds it harder than ever to get preachers; the condition of the Methodist Church is distressing in the extreme, and the Baptists are going through a period of marked depression." "Nine tenths of all the preachers in his circle of acquaintance are discouraged. The great majority of pastors are practically hopeless of accomplishing anything worth while." "In Russia the peasants are very largely becoming either indifferent to the Greek Church or hostile to it. In Austria there is a revolt against ecclesiastical authority. In Germany attendance at worship is falling off. In Italy and Spain it is the same thing. Everybody knows how enormous is the proportion of the French people untouched by the Church. In Great Britain there are echoes of our own depression. Whoever has had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the mental condition of the intelligent classes in Europe and America, must have perceived that there is a great and rapidly increasing departure from the public religious faith; and that, while among the more frank this divergence is not concealed, there is a far more extensive and far more dangerous secession, private and unacknowledged. So widespread and so powerful is this secession that it can neither be treated with contempt nor with punishment. It cannot be extinguished by derision, by vituperation, or by force. The time is rapidly approaching when it will give rise to serious political results." "Desertions from the State Church

in Germany are increasing so rapidly, that grave apprehensions are caused in ecclesiastical circles. Added to this is the significant fact that the numbers of communions, baptisms, and church marriages are rapidly diminishing." "The last decade has been the most strenuous and discouraging for Christian workers which this city (New York) has probably ever known." "There is such a thing as a religious crisis in America, however much we may scoff at the idea."

The thought of coupling in some way these two series of facts must have occurred even to the most casual reader. There is a causal connection between the rise of democracy and the decline of ecclesiasticism. The idea is getting abroad among the working masses that institutionalized religion is on the side of the propertied class. Says Guizot: "The Church has always sided with despotism." Emperor Charles V saw in the Reformation the break-up of the old ecclesiastical system, the forerunner of political revolutions. States a news despatch from Germany: "Among the working classes, especially those attached to the Social Democratic party, there exists a bitter hostility to the clergy and all institutions which they control," and we read that in Germany church-going on the part of any member of the proletariat is "looked upon as disloyalty to class." "In the present democratic revolution, the churches are not for the most part with the rising people, but are either indifferent or are with the dominant class. The clergy represent privilege." Says a labour leader: "The American workingman hates the very shadow that the spire

of the village church casts across his pathway." And as to the cities, "the overwhelming proportion of workingmen is out of touch with the churches." Witnesses crowd to the stand: "We don't want church institutionalism. It leads to intolerance, loss of liberty, and persecution; and then the cause of the people goes to the wall." The doctrine of the divine right of property is remembered — that the mass of people are born with saddles on their backs, and a favoured few booted and spurred to ride them legitimately by the grace of God. The priest and the exploiter — natural born twins: "Issachar is a strong ass crouching between two burdens." "Only employers, trades-people, property owners and usurers go to church." "The religious world with its organizations is something far removed from the labour world with its organizations. The two are drifting farther apart from each other every year." Says the *Labour Leader*, editorially: "In these later days the Church has fallen almost into obscurity as a power in the moral and civic life of the nation. Its form remains, its habiliments are still gorgeous: but it walks behind, not in front of the State, and its gestures and speech are almost unheeded in the great march of the nation." The wage earners huzzah Shaftesbury when he exclaims, amidst his campaign for human rights: "The sinners are with us; it is the saints who fight against us." "The surprising thing to me is not that work people don't attend church. The surprise would be if they were to attend church. Why should work people attend church? What have they got to learn there? The Church has allied itself with land and capital, and generally with the master against his

workmen. Its clergymen have dined with the rich and preached at the poor." Exclaimed Moody: "The gulf between the church and the masses is growing deeper, wider, and darker every hour." "The successful classes, even if they didn't know it, have used religion and heaven to keep the peace and to put off a lot of troublesome duties." The democracy is unable to believe that the Church is entirely disinterested in her zeal to preserve the present order of things. It points to the wealth pouring into her coffers and those of her allied institutions, and says, Does the Church serve Capitalism for naught? It points further to the more than suspected source of much of this wealth, and refuses to be impressed by the Church's richness of organization and sumptuous adornment. As when one discovers a corpse under a lilac tree, feeding its beauty, thereafter for all time there hangs over that tree a haunting ghastliness.

Quite pertinent to this suspicious attitude of the submerged classes toward organized religion, are some phases of priestly activity in another day. Conspicuously, there is the Tower of Babel story — in every line of it the pen of the priest. "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven" — not so wicked an attempt on the part of those builders. To the contrary it seems to have been a fine undertaking — the Tubal Cains of that day exulting in their progressive mastership over nature and reaching up toward a neighbourly relationship with heaven. "Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" — an honourable motive and one that has

inspired the noble handicrafter in every age. But it was accounted by the priest mind a parlous thing for the working masses to get too exalted an opinion of themselves. Then, as now, religion was thought to reside in man's weakness and not in his strength — in his humiliations rather than in his masteries and achievements. Therefore this priest narrative pictures heaven as jealous and as frustrating the builders: "The Lord scattered them, and they left off to build the city." The curse upon labour, in Genesis, is a chip from the same block. The strict embargo placed around the Tree of Knowledge, also reeks of this grudging and distrustful attitude of the priest toward the common people: "In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods" — recalling that later motto of the Church, "Ignorance is the mother of devotion." Not strange that certain sects among the gnostics boldly denounced this priest-pictured god as a malicious power seeking to thwart man's upward strivings, and worshipped the Serpent as the Prometheus of the world, true friend of man, the forerunner and type of the Messiah.

This Promethean struggle between the masses and the Olympian ones, jealous of their class privileges, has left a trail across several literatures. It is seen in the Greek legends of the Aloidæ, who sought to reach heaven by piling up mountains, and were wrathfully cast down. Also in the Hindu legend of the tree which sought to grow into heaven, and which Brahma blasted. Pindar, the singer of aristocracy, issues a warning note: "Seek not to become a god." The Olympians in sooth are a close

corporation jealous of their privileges, as the House of Lords to-day is averse to the creation of additional peers. That the Lord of the skies is perhaps on the side of the toiling masses, would have been an upheaving dogma. Accordingly the heavens are pictured by the subsidized priest-poets as ablaze with wrath at presumptuous man. Let a popular agitator like Prometheus scale the flaming ramparts of the skies to carry back fire to the masses, "to make blind hopes inhabit mortal souls," he is straightway crucified to a cliff in the Caucasus, as a warning to agrarian agitators for all time. Æschylus exclaims against "the vanity of men and their pride that toucheth the sky." But Lucretius seeks to sweep these priest-made gods away, as something repressive, a deadener of human strivings; and he lauded Epicurus as the saviour of men: "When human life lay shamefully grovelling on the earth, oppressed by religion which showed her head from the regions of the sky lowering down upon mortals with horrible aspect, then first a man of Greece dared raise aloft his mortal eyes and take stand against her."

Through so long ages now has this note of the divine jealousy against man been harped, that it has got into the blood. It is seen in that superstitious fear of being happy, that vague, haunting feel that the divine nature begrudges man good things. This well-nigh omnipresent dread finds voice in Caliban's picture of Setebos:

> "Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire
> Is not to seem too happy."

The notion of the masses as a sub-human herd who cannot be safely entrusted with knowledge and privileges, sounds harmonious in Machiavelli: "And things cannot well be otherwise; for men will always naturally prove bad, unless some necessity constrains them to be good." But it comes with an ungracious note from Luther. When the peasants, basing on the identical principle whereby he laid claim to personal freedom, and spurred by sharper wrongs than his, uprose, this offspring of a miner uttered himself thus: "A rebel is outlawed of God and Kaiser. Therefore who can and will first slaughter such a man, does right well, since upon such a common rebel every man is alike judge and executioner. Therefore who can, shall here openly or secretly smite, slaughter and stab; and hold that there is nothing more poisonous, more harmful, more devilish than a rebellious man." Thereupon the peasants were racked, flayed, fagoted. Their tongues were torn out by red-hot pincers. They were subjected to every refinement of agony. Of two of them, handicraftsmen, who were being burnt, the chronicles record: "They lived long and cried with all their hearts to God; it was pitiable to hear them." Not to be wondered that Melancthon was constrained to admit that the people abhorred himself and his fellow-divines. Professor Pollard in the "Cambridge Modern History" says of Luther that he had "the upstart's contempt for the class from which he sprang"; and again: "His sympathy with the masses seems to have been limited to those occasions when he saw in them a useful weapon to hold over the heads of his enemies."

The same dynasty in England that enacted the Book of Common Prayer, enacted a statute against the working class — the land's "spittle and filth," as they were termed — to the effect that men and women able to work and who were found idle for three days, "are to be branded with a red-hot iron on the breast." Apparently, in taking a vacation for three whole days together, the toilers were "following too much the devices and desires of their own hearts." And again: "Whereas, late against the Malice of Servants which were idle and not willing to serve, after the Pestilence, without taking excessive wages, an ordinance was passed to which said Servants pay no regard, but considering only their own ease and singular covetise, do withdraw from Great Men and others," therefore — it was enacted that workmen who refused to work for the same wages as before the Plague had decimated the population, should have the letter F (Falsity) burned into their foreheads. Further, inasmuch as certain "artificers, handicraftsmen, and labourers," had "sworn mutual oaths" as to the conditions under which they would work, they were taken in hand by the Lords Temporal and Spiritual — the usual penalties, fine, the pillory, mutilation. Thereupon the lords of the land turned their attention to the prayer book, and in imposing liturgy exhorted the peasantry to a "pure, humble and charitable mind, and perfect resignation to the divine will." Practically unchanged to this day, the book utters its petition each Sunday, "O Lord, save the State." There are those who say that the petition is timely.

It was in the nineteenth century that Rev. Dr. Andrew

Bell delivered himself: "There is a risk of elevating, by an indiscriminating education, the minds of those doomed to the drudgery of daily labour above their condition, and thereby rendering them discontented and unhappy in their lot. It may suffice to teach the generality on an economical plan, to read their Bibles and understand the doctrines of our holy religion." And but just now a denominational journal writes: "It is a comforting thought that, if God has seen fit to keep a majority of His children from privileges which we think essential to happiness, He has made them capable of being happy with the fewer and simpler things which He has allowed them."

Not strange, therefore, that there is a something of bitterness in the heart of the wage earners toward the Church:

> "Parson do preach, and tell me to pray,
> And to think of my work, and not ask more pay.
> I'm to call all I gets, 'the Chastening Rod,'
> And look up to my betters, and then thank God."

A consciousness of power is maturing in the breast of the proletariat. And this is one of the mutterings which they are muttering to-day: "The social well-being of the people, the upward movement of the non-propertied or labour classes to material welfare, is continually being obstructed by conceptions of political subserviency and passive obedience to despotic authority, which is directly traceable to Christian doctrine." Which spirit of interrogation is a portent. Old Doctor Parsons figured it out that God created the world, "about five thousand, six

hundred and odde yeares agoe"; and continued: "And if they aske what God was doing before this short number of yeares, we answered with St. Augustine replying to such curious questioners, that He was framing Hell for them." But the "curious questioners" believe themselves to be on too hot a trail to be put off either by entreaties, threats, or by red herrings dragged across the scent.

The democracy believes that the Church in its present form is a passing institution. That she is infinitely blasé of the religion handed down. They detect an unmistakable languor in her goings — the wearing out of her old enthusiasms. The Church is still accomplishing good. But the fire of youth is gone out of her. She is in the mid-afternoon of her existence — the secret of perennial morn having somehow been lost. There is a mellowness about her, but it is the mellowness of decay. The last sunset flush is gorgeous, but it has an unmistakable morituri touch — the "we-who-are-about-to-die" tone effect. The Church places her faith and her hope in charity. Almsgiving is her alpha and omega. She is an assuager of the wounds inflicted by the industrial brigandage, but leaves the brigands unmolested. Sanitation is the key word in modern medicine — to cleanse the air of disease and thus bathe the people in an atmosphere of health. But the Church practises still in the school of medication, oblivious of the discovery that to drain a swamp is better than barrels of quinine. Hers the patrician ideal: the rich doling driblets of their surplus to the poor. She enjoins upon the lowly a mood of gratefulness toward the benevolent feudalism of the day,

"that they may increase and multiply their mercies upon us." Philanthropy, thou greatest foe of liberty! Nothing kills character so much as the acceptance of alms.

Millions for charity, but not a cent for justice! The democracy charges that the Church is confederate with the despotisms that are enthroning themselves upon the people. She sees not with an eye singled to the imperatives of the soul, but turns a solicitous glance ever to the source of her benevolences. In her endeavours to serve God and Mammon, she has become cross-eyed — is losing the power to know good and evil. She is tending to religiousness as a substitute for righteousness. Mammonism pays the fiddler and can call the tune. It expects the Church, "picture-like, to hang by the wall." Therefore her master note — submissiveness: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." She chants the beauty of non-resistance. Many a devotee of social readjustment marvels that it is so difficult to awaken the people on questions in which they themselves are so vitally concerned. The explanation in large part is here. Through the pulpit a narcotizing influence is at work. Each Lord's Day morning, in city and village and country crossroads, sees a shower of spiritual cocaine sprinkled copiously on the assembled congregations, numbing the pain of the deep-lying social cancer and by slow degrees killing the nerves of feeling. Thus, by the cumulative power of transmission through the generations, there has been bred in the people a sheep-likeness under injustices which otherwise were easily remediable. "These are spots in your feasts of charity." Spiritual thraldom breeds economic thraldom.

Despite magnificent exceptions — preachers who are veritably in the prophetic succession — the democracy charges home the indictment. The organized religion of our day is a continuing education in servility and dependence. Hence, the widespread feeling of the futility of social effort — the social despair. As long as the religion of a people is one of kind-hearted feudalism, every effort at fundamental democracy will abort; and each still birth renders the next travail more uncertain.

"The Bible good for the lower orders to accept!" Is religion to become a concerted masquerade? Churchmen defend their piously fraudulent view of the universe by the argument that social stability requires it: "The truths which hold society together are more important than the truths which are demanded merely by the intellect." To which the democracy makes reply that "truths" arrived at by intellectual castration are not going to be able long to hold society together. "Whether the historical statements on which the accepted creeds are based be true or not, an abrupt abandonment of these creeds is not desirable"— that writer is apparently himself one of those who in his own words "have much more faith in the political and social value of Christianity than in its philosophical and historical soundness." But a church of make-believers would very soon beget a generation of non-believers. The spell of cosmic superstition is broken. A determination to know is now in man. He accounts reverence for the fact a holier thing than reverence for the past. The pulpit, for the "edification of the faithful," may thunder its anathemas and "deal damnation round the land." But this spirit of inter-

rogation is not going to be exorcised with holy water. Chinese gongs have been found a quite useless weapon against modern artillery.

It should be interpolated at once that this antagonism of the working class to the Church, does not carry an antagonism also to Jesus. On the contrary, the Workingman of Nazareth probably never stood higher in their esteem or more ardent in their affections. Says one of them: "The Church has as an organized body no sympathy for the masses. It is a sort of fashionable club where the rich are entertained and amused, and where most of the ministers are muzzled by their masters and dare not preach the gospel of the Carpenter of Nazareth." Another: "I don't hold with church-going people at all but I will say this: I believe Jesus Christ was a downright good fellow." It is not uncommon in labour assemblies, where the name of the Church is hissed, to hear the name of the Galilean roundly applauded. Says one: "An intimate acquaintance with many thousands of workingmen has taught me that, even when there is no hostility whatever to religion, there is a sort of subconscious and unrecognized feeling of antagonism to the Church." "The talk of the churches," states a student of recognized soberness and insight, "is for the most part as intelligible as Hebrew to the modern handworker; but in the teaching of Jesus he seems to hear the welcome accents of a familiar tongue." Still another: "Among the working classes only one quality of religion remains, and that is respect and reverence for Jesus Christ." The Labourist party in Belgium has built

in Brussels the Maison du peuple. In an upper lecture hall in that building hangs across the end of the platform a great curtain. Draw it aside, you behold in fresco — The Nazarene. Though familiar to them was the phrase, "Dieu l'enemi," the French Communists put the picture of the Wage Earner of Galilee in their halls with the words underneath: "The first Representative of the People." Camille Desmoulins styles him, "Le Bon Sansculotte." Affirms one who knows: "Many of the most trusted present-day labour leaders are firm in their allegiance to Jesus. They base even their political propaganda upon him, and look to him for the coming victory. Whilst among others, less emphatic in their religious beliefs, there is wonderful reverence for the Man of Nazareth." "We used to think," says one of them, "that Christ was a fiction of the priests. But now we find that he was a man after all like us — a poor workingman who has a heart for the poor. And now that we understand this, we say, He is the man for us."

But the Church party has seen nothing significant in this loyalty of the working masses toward her liege Lord. This zeitgeist, democracy, is to her no other than a sooty devil from Tartarus. She likens it to terrible gog and magog, whose advent was foretold in Holy Writ. Her portrait of it would be horned, hoofed, tailed. Beholding her influence at wane among the masses — the march of the world on its way, herself more and more neglected — she takes up her lamentation: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." The rise of the proletariat is termed more "dangerous to civilized society" than an

invasion of Huns, Goths, and Saracens. It "grievously outrages the Holy Ghost." Its leaders are "presumptuous, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities, natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed." They are "as one who has been handed over to the Evil One." "Antichrist is here, the man of sin." "The times are very terrible." The old litany framed a collect against the Turk and the comet; a third is now being added: "From the Turk, the comet, and the democracy, good Lord, deliver us." "The Inquisition is an urgent necessity in view of the unbelief of the present age." An educated person enlisting on the side of the submerged, is declassé — regarded as "a heathen man and a publican." Democracy's imperturbable advance is to the Establishment as the rearing of leviathan — his "teeth are terrible round about; by his neesings a light doth shine; out of his nostrils goeth smoke; his breath kindleth coals; in his neck remaineth strength, his heart is as firm as a stone; when he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid." They are in doleful case — confusion become worse confounded. The leaders of the Church assemble themselves, scratch perplexed heads, and read the prayer, "For those Who Are at Sea." A welter of fears and hatings and despairs!

Nor is this wail of terror altogether unfounded. The working class composes 83 per cent. of the population, and is growing. In an age of triumphant industrialism, to be temperamentally unable to grasp thoughts and things industrial, is a Tekel Upharsin on the wall of any church. The alienation of the world's workers from the world's religion is a portent whose gravity cannot be overstressed. "The social question of to-day," said Disraeli,

"is only a zephyr which rustles the leaves, but will become soon a hurricane." Daily the dragon seed matures.

And so has come about an unhappy situation — industrialism and religion divorced from each other. They were meant to be mates. Industrialism needs the spiritual note, to impart to it conscience, zest, imagination — the qualities which make handicraftsmen into artists. Religion needs likewise the industrial note, to give to its airy visions a body and local habitation, lest its dreamings, vague and vapourish, become sickly fermentations of the brain. But a rupture in the marital relations of these two has taken place. Meant for each other, each incomplete without the other, they have got into a state of mutual incompatibility. In place of confidence there is distrust, coldness, crimination. There is being taken out between them a bill of divorcement.

Loving his Church with a bitter love, The Carpenter on the cross sees only this, after the passion of two thousand years.

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THE CALL OF THE CARPENTER

CHAPTER I

EMPIRE

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." Our attention is arrested by the audacity of the thing. "That all the world should be taxed!" The brazenness of the decree extorts a kind of admiration, like that extended to brigands who exhibit nerve in uncommon degree. That kind of admiration and no other. Because people to-day are under no illusion as to the nature of this "tax." Rome was under no illusion either. Whatever her faults, hypocrisy was not one of them. And this which our record pleasantly terms a "tax," was recognized by Rome herself as booty, plain and flat. No pretence that she was levying it on the peoples with their consent, or was to expend it for their benefit. It was the spoils of conquest, and was extracted at the point of the sword. It was a hold-up game — frankly admitted to be such by the "taxer," and howlingly described as such by the "taxed." Our wonder is not that the people howled. Our wonder is that they did not howl louder. That a small group on the banks of the Tiber could hold up "the whole world," argues a distinct decay of spirit in the people thus held up. A lone wolf — the simile is Rome's; she traced her origin

to a she-wolf — a lone wolf prevails against a flock of a hundred sheep, not so much because of his wolfiness as because of their sheepiness.

But there was a stalwart little people in Rome's province of Syria who had not as yet so lost spirit as to concede the right of wolves to be wolves and of sheep to be sheep. This people was enrolled in the list of the conquered. But it had only been a conquest of territory. The soul was unsurrendered. And just about now — to be exact, precisely during a journey on the part of his parents to pay this "tax" — there was being born in this unconquered race a leader who was to call back to self-respect the peoples thus subjugated, raising up in them once more a free spirit. In fact, knowing pre-natal influence as we now do, we can affirm that this particular "tax," dragging him as it did by the umbilical cord across the landscape of Syria, must have had something to do with moulding him into the economic out-and-outer which we behold him later. This "tax" was the first instance in history of brigandage on a world scale. It is more than an accident, therefore, that its incidence coincided with the gestation period of a child who as man was to vision a world-wide union of the toiling masses against the legalized brigandage which had its headquarters on the Tiber. For he felt the shock of this new and fateful force that had come into the world, while he was yet unborn, and at a time when, among most nations, even those but partially civilized, mother and child have immemorially been accorded a cessation of brutality.

The reader has caught the drift. We here address ourselves to view Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, from the viewpoint of economics. Concededly a different viewpoint from that usually held. But we shall be rigorously historical. The present is not a work of the imagination. It affirms to be a piece of cool, scientific history. If the portrait of The Carpenter here unearthed differs from the one commonly viewed, may it not be because accretions of time have defaced the picture, blurring its aforetime sharpness? — incrustations which are now peeling off, by grace of the critical scholarship of our day, revealing some vivid tints in the portrait. The attempt in these pages is that of a restoration. It slavishly follows the ancient records, and is ambitious of nothing more than to retrace the picture as it was at the first. No originality is claimed. I have been an incontinent borrower. The book is plagiaristic throughout.

Entirely modern is the study of economic backgrounds. It was a study which ancient chroniclers did not at all take to. Their interest lay in kings and conquerors. Themselves members of the privileged class, they accounted the common people a degrading theme. History in the pre-democratic eras was a Book of Kings, and only incidentally a Book of Peoples. The people! Their short and simple annals were deemed unworthy the pen of a chronicler — lives of a dull monotone, an unrelieved gray of drudgery and the daily round. Whereas the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, gave to the colourists the opportunity they craved for splendid patches of purple.

There was also another — more cogent — reason why

the historians of that day did not chronicle the life conditions of the proletariat. The overlords, patrons of the historical art, did not wish those conditions chronicled — social history might prove explosive. The seigniorial class lived on the heaving crust of a volcano. Any book calculated to break open that crust, if only for a peep-sight into the human depths below, would have met hard sledding with the publishing houses of the period. If any such manuscripts did get published, the copies were hunted out ruthlessly by imperial decree. For, except in the first three books of the New Testament, we have extant no contemporary ancient chronicles written by and for the people themselves. In the pages that treated of the slave Spartacus and the humiliations he inflicted on Rome's master class, both Sallust and Livy are to this day missing.

In this way ancient civilization was given a glittering front. But the type of historian that is being developed by democracy, is achieving a change of base. He is going to peer behind that imposing façade to the social life of the times — the myriad slaves toiling in the silver mines of the Athenians, in the vast brick fields of Rome, in the copper mines of Sinai, in galleys on the Mediterranean, in the gold mines of Egypt, in the quarries of Numidia and Greece; he is going to listen to the clank of the chains in the vineyards of Italy. Nor are we altogether without materials, outside the three books mentioned, for such a study. Slip-ups will occur in the most rigorously supervised bureau of history. The hundred-eyed censor can but imperfectly visée such material for instance as personal correspondence. So

that we can beguile from these accidents and fugitive pieces a fairly coherent account of life in the dumb ages — those submerged classes which, denied even the privilege of articulating their sorrows, were yet the foundation of the millionairic splendour and pageantry which monopolize the pages of ancient writ. To view that dim mass of unrequited toil cannot but be a rewarding task. For Christianity took its rise in an economic upheaval. We shall see that even its highest and most spiritual reaches had a rootage in the industrial condition of the masses.

The Roman Empire was a world-wide confederation of aristocracies for the perpetuation of human servitude. Customarily that empire has been pictured in terms of military art, of jurisprudence, or of government. But these phases of it were secondary. Economic exploitation was the end in view, the organizing purpose throughout. For the Romans were enormously "practical." Aught smacking of idealism was laughed by them out of court. Once upon a time they had had a religion. But this was back in Rome's early days; and she was not a despoiler of peoples then. Before the empire — her era of aggression — started in, her idealism had left off, she had entered upon her decadence. In fact her only ideal now was to frame a system of human relationships so minutely administered by law that idealism would be unnecessary. Her famed codes of jurisprudence and systems of administration had for their purpose to bring life down out of the cloud-lands of sentiment onto a level where law would be everywhere operative. Pa-

triotism, racial inheritance, ancestral literatures, the art and worship of the peoples — Rome "cared for none of these things." For her portion the pot of gold; to others the rainbow, and welcome. It was because of this hard materiality, this absence of sentiment, that the empire was able to override national boundaries and establish a world organization where others had failed. The Romans' one object was revenue, an object which they pursued quite unhindered by any sentiment of patriotism even toward their own country. Therefore they were enabled to approach the class of revenue-worshippers among other peoples on the same cash basis, propose an alliance, and laugh them out of any patriotic objections which might prompt themselves.

In the countries of the ancient world, even before the formation of the empire, slavery was the basis of society. In each was a capitalist class and a slave class. The capitalists, however, were constantly in fear of slave insurrection. The dread clouded their sunshine by day, and nightmared their sleep; for they saw, piling up against them, a discontent hell-deep and heaven-high. The fear made them cruel; it goaded them to harsh measures of repression. Repression, however, only nagged the servile class into greater restiveness, which in turn called for repression still more cruel. The exploiters found themselves caught in this vicious circle: fear, cruelty, revolt; thereupon more fear, more cruelty, more revolt. A descensus Averni. The situation was becoming intolerable. Hereupon Rome appeared with her proposal of a world-wide federation of the capitalist class against this restive proletariat, whereby they could

pool their separate armies into a military unit, and hurl its entire weight against a popular uprising in any one of the countries. The proposal was hailed with joy. A concordat with the noblesse of every country was drawn up. The Roman Empire was the result.

Rome's empire was "The System" at work in the ancient world. She did not conquer the nations. She annexed them, by means of a coalition with the local capitalist group in each. This manner of her procedure is seen in her dealings with the Sabine Claudii, and at Veii and Capua. Also in the city states of Etruria, Campania, and Magna Græcia. Wherever the strain between the local privileged class and its proletariat was intense, Rome found natural allies in the former. In the march of the Roman conqueror through Greece, the Hellenic aristocracies opened to him their gates. In Carthage the upper class detested the war and wished to make peace with Rome. Cæsar found in Gaul a small plutocracy grown rich on the war, usury and the farming of the public taxes; he used them as the nucleus of his organization in annexing the provinces. In Palestine, much of the New Testament is the narrative of the coalescence of the native princes with the Roman invader. Brain-sweat has been copiously expended to discover why Rome succeeded in the business of world-empire, where men like Alexander had failed. Merivale gives up in despair and calls Rome's secret of success, "one of the lost arts." The clue is found here in economics. Rome succeeded because she sought to impose no new patriotism on the peoples. Her motto was, "For Revenue Only"; therefore she found a kindred

class in each of the countries, and with that class she formed an alliance. This is why, once she had hit upon the method, her empire spread so rapidly over the earth. It took Rome five hundred years to conquer Italy. She conquered the rest of the world in fifty-three years. It was economic interest that held the empire together. The local oligarchies were bound by gold chains about the feet of Rome. The palace of the Emperor on the Palatine became a university to which were sent the sons of allied sovereigns for an education. Native oligarchies, living under Rome's protectorate, were moons depending upon their central sun for light. Rome's genius for conquest was great, but her genius for coalition was greater. With her these two were one. Rome coalesced with the exploiter class in every country, for joint conquest over the proletariat in every country.

Machiavelli discerned the secret of Rome's success in empire-building. Said he: "Conquered states that have been accustomed to liberty and the government of their own laws can be held by the conqueror in three different ways. The first is to ruin them; the second, for the conqueror to go and reside there in person; and the third is to allow them to continue to live under their own laws, subject to a regular tribute, and to create in them a government of a few, who will keep the government friendly to the conqueror. Such a government, having been established by the new prince, knows that it cannot maintain itself without the support of his power and friendship, and it becomes its interest therefore to sustain him." Ferrero also, though under the spell of the old military and imperial concepts, never-

theless lets drop some words that support our contention: "Everywhere, even in the most distant regions," says he, "powerful minorities formed that worked for Rome and against old separating, anti-uniting forces, against old traditions and local patriotism alike. The wealthy classes everywhere became in a special way wholly favourable to Rome"; and again: "The economic unification was first and was entire; then came the political unity, which was less complete than the unifying of material interests." The evidence is incontestable: Roman success was due quite as much to the cleverness of her diplomacy as to her prowess in arms. England has succeeded in India and Egypt because she too has caught the secret—she governs through native rulers.

It may be objected that the economic was not the sole reason for the formation of the empire; that the common danger of a Teutonic invasion was equally a motive in the coalescence of the Mediterranean aristocracies into a united military front. But the Teutonic danger would not in itself have been alarming. There had been inroads of the barbarian in earlier days before slavery had corrupted the Mediterranean blood; and they had been easily taken care of. Had a just economic condition continued to prevail, successive immigrations of Teuton folk could readily have been assimilated, to add new vigour to the old societies. It was the merciless exploitation of one class by another which vitiated the industry of the Mediterranean world, corrupted its life and weakened its defences; and so made the Teuton danger real. For when the avalanche which had been wrongfully allowed to pile up suddenly broke, and the

barbarians poured down from out the northern mountains to challenge the empire, they challenged an empire divided against itself; and they beheld the gates opening to them from the inside. The classic world came not to an end by wounds from without; it met its death from internal hemorrhage. And this open sore in her intestines was the ruthless, cold, scientific exploitation of one part of society by the other part, which sore in its aggravated form came with the coming of the empire and was the empire.

This was the Roman Empire's contribution to the world's thought, namely, the solidarity of capital, the oneness of the interests of property irrespective of national boundaries. Until Rome appeared to preach this doctrine, the capitalist class in the various countries had been pillaging each other. The senatorial oligarchy of one nation would declare war against a neighbouring nation, looking to the spoils of battle to defray the expenses of the campaign and leave a comfortable surplus as profit. Not an ideal state of affairs, true. Nevertheless it was infinitely preferable to "The System" introduced by the Romans, because it had promoted a rough kind of democracy, the noblesse and proletariat of one country being welded into a patriotic oneness by the exigencies of their common war with the neighbour state. Thus it had redeemed the people from absolute degradation; by the crude patriotism engendered it was keeping a strain of idealism alive; and thus was preserving the soul of man against the time when the futility of war as a means of enrichment would be discovered and each people would absorb itself in the

development of its natural resources. But Rome knocked at the gates, and changed all this. She persuaded the local oligarchy in each country to deride with her derision all dream-stuff, such as patriotism, racial ideals, ancestral loyalties. Revenue was the thing around which all her life revolved, and she brought these others to the same way of thinking. Rome showed to the privileged class in each country that in competing amongst themselves they were likely to meet with the fate of the two men in the fable who, disputing with each other for the exclusive ownership of the beast, looked up to see the ass running away from both of them. The civil wars in Rome herself had had this as their motive, the patricians and plebs endlessly squabbling as to who should enjoy the wealth that was being created by the slave class. "Let us cease to exploit one another, and together exploit the working class," now was Rome's proposal.

The idea came at the psychological moment. The slave class, estimated by Gibbon at sixty millions — an entire half of the world's population — was straining at all the hatches of the slaver and threatening at any moment to break out from the hold and win a share of the sunshine and open space up on deck. Rome had felt the pressure on her own hatchway even more than the other masters of the vessel. Her restive slave class was becoming more restive. She had erected a statue to "Quiet," and had tried the experiment of making Contentment into a religious cult. In vain. The seething at the bottom of society was becoming ever more turbulent. Spartacus, a few years before, had shown

how a revolt could be conducted, and the object lesson was fresh in mind, a star of hope in the sky of every slave, a portent in the sky of every owner of slaves. Escaping with his companions from the slave stable at Capua, where they were being fattened for the amphitheatre, he had entrenched himself in the crater of an extinct volcano. From thence he issued a proclamation of universal freedom. Slaves from plantations round about flocked to his standard. He became the head of a revolution. Rome sent armies against him one after another, only to see them come back defeated. For two interminable years Spartacus maintained the war. At last he was destroyed, but not until he had struck chill into the spinal jelly of every owner of human flesh in the Roman state. Furthermore, there was constant fear lest there might arise more fools like the Gracchi, patrician traitors to their class, and incite the populace to demands of justice. A measure had been proposed in the Roman Senate to dress slaves in a uniform livery, so as to distinguish them from freemen. It was killed straightway by the argument that this would disclose to the slaves their numerical strength. We can credit Tacitus, therefore, when he says that the fear of slave insurrection was chronic. Nor was this confined to Rome. In every state of the ancient world there was a proletary restlessness — cursings that were loud, the deep rumble and mutterings of a storm about to break.

Accordingly, Rome's proposal of a league of the capitalist class everywhere was greeted with instant favour. And the empire was formed. It was an Intimidation Trust, Rome, as promoter of the new cor-

poration, being its master spirit and taking a promoter's profit. It was an oligarchy of oligarchies. Formerly each of them had maintained an army of its own. Now these were rolled into one, with an Imperator at its head. By means of uniform dress, weapons, tactics, and organization, the united armies were disciplined into a fighting unit of high efficiency. Great causeways were built, for celerity in mobilizing the legions. These roads were paved with flat stones, so as to make for swift marching. They were carried straight across the landscape, cutting through mountains, and carrying over valleys on great archways. No expense was spared in shortening distances — the reach of the entire military force into the district of every member of the Corporation, was the heart of the system. Let a local prince or princeling in any part of the empire send in a call for help against his mutinous subjects, within forty-eight hours there would glitter on the horizon the spear flash of the gathering legions, bearing down upon that spot from every quarter of the world.

Cleveland's "the cohesion of wealth," is modern. But the thing itself is ancient. The tendency of the families of wealth in every country to form a class by themselves, is deep-set in the human makeup. Rome carried the tendency one step further — she cemented the moneyed class in the various countries into an international combine. "Peace and order" were at last secure. An antitoxin against insomnia had been devised. Slave owners could now lay their heads on their pillows at night, without the fear of insurrection gnawing them through the night-watches. An uprising of the toiling

masses, no matter how formidable, could be handled. Upon a rebellious district could be mobilized in shortest time six and twenty legions. The machinery of intimidation was complete. Man was undermost, and property paramount. The "Golden Age" — literally — set in. The Roman Empire, that apotheosis of property rights, fastened itself upon the world. Embracing all nations and tongues and climates, a motley crew, they had one cohering principle which swallowed up their diversities — the coherence of a common plunder.

CHAPTER II

WORKING-CLASS GALILEE

As has been stated, the extension of the Roman "System" to include the Jews, a sturdy mountaineer folk in the hill country of Syria, met there a vehement opposition. And in Galilee, one of the districts of the Jews, the most vehemency of all. This Galilee, restive under every domination, was famed for the intense spirit of its inhabitants. Josephus as a general had carried on military operations there, and later as a historian was moved to bear testimony to the valour of her people. In this she differed from the other Palestine district, Judea, and its capital city, Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem was the home of the country's aristocracy, we read of the Bethlehem event: "When Herod, the king, had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Like the local aristocracies in all the other countries of the world, these had lined up with the Romans—were federated with the invader. When Pompey, some years before this, had marched against Jerusalem, the high priests there, representing the local ruling caste, had opened the gates to him. Galilee, a working-class district, was left therefore as the sole leader of the popular cause. The fight is always hottest where the lines come closest together; and the controversy between horny-handed Galilee and the

Jerusalemite set, haughty with its wealth and learning, was inveterate. But this was only a phase of the larger controversy — that of the labouring class everywhere against the invasive capitalism of the empire and its 'ndustrialism based on slavery.

The Galileans, no better than the other provinces, could have given an explanation of this new thing in the world, the Roman Empire. No age fully understands itself. Lapse of time is needed for perspective. And if the Galileans had been called upon to chart the current of the world politics of the day, they would probably have made sorry work of it. They felt rather than discerned the presence of a new force in the world; and they divined that it boded no good. Hitherto there had been frequent changes in the tyranny under which, for some four hundred years back, they had lived; and this alternation of masters had kept hope alive. Now there was a sense of permanency in the despotism which, from Antioch as its land base, was bearing down upon them in the trail of the Roman legions. There was an imperious note in the commands of the tribute gatherers, as though an infinite arm of power was now behind the fist which lay at their throat, demanding their goods. Furthermore, all of the tyrannies hitherto had been of the East, Eastern. And though exacting the uttermost farthing of tribute, these despotisms had been gilded with a respect for Asiatic ideals, religion, reverence, a hold-fast in the Unseen. But this new despotism was characterized by a hard materiality, untempered by sentiment of any kind, a race of conquerors self-indulging, heavy-fisted, cynical. "The gods are rheumatic when

we ask them to come to our relief," was Rome's way of meeting idealism of any sort. Subconsciously the Galileans felt themselves in the presence of some fate, as though the sky was turning to brass over their heads and they were to be cooped under that inverted bowl forever.

A young woman by the name of Mary, in Nazareth of Galilee, was particularly stirred by this coming of despotism. Mary was of uncommon force of character. Her dominant trait seems to have been independency, showing itself in a disregard of social conventions, and in her zeal for her country's political and economic restoration. Ever since the Jews had lost their independence and had become humiliated by subjection to a foreign power, there had been utterances of hope on the part of her patriot wise men to the effect that restoration would some time or other come, because a leader equal to the task would be born. Now as the Roman oppression fastened its grip on the people and the times became hard and harder, a longing for this Deliverer promised of old to Israel burst into glowing flame in thousands of hearts. There seems to have been a circle of these waiting souls, with something of solidarity amongst them, their common hope knitting them into an intimacy of fellowship. They knew each other, paid visits back and forth, and heartened themselves by mutual exhortation. This group made much of the prophetic sections in their national scriptures. Isaiah's Redeemer-dream was their meat and drink. We read of them that they "waited for the consolation of Israel." Nor did they content themselves alone with "waiting." Prophecy has a

psychological base, in that a sure and longing expectation induces a set of the will, a resolve to bring the expectation to pass. Therefore the members of this expectant fellowship sought an active programme whereby the prophecies of deliverance should be translated into performance.

Of this circle of patriot souls, Mary was a member. She was a choice representative of them, and seems to have been something of a leader in their councils even before our narrative opens. She now steps to the front as their foremost spirit. Betrothed to Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, she resolves that if it is permitted her to become a mother she will dedicate the child, be it son or daughter, to the cause. Joseph — since matings go by opposites — was a fit companion. He is described by a word which — a fact of significance — has disappeared from our vocabulary: Joseph was a "just" man. Quiet efficiency, wise silence, faithful workmanship, a sadly humourous contemplation of the human drama, seem to have characterized him. "Greatheart" is perhaps the fitting term. He lacked, however, the aggressive temperament which the times demanded. This element came from Mary. In launching the new force into human history which we are about to witness, she was the primum mobile. Hers was the brain that dared conceive, hers the spirit that dared to execute. We read, "his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover." By Jewish law the woman was not required to attend these feasts; she could be represented by her husband. The fact, therefore, that Mary refused to avail herself of this exemption, and entered personally into the duties and privileges of a devout patriot, con-

firms the forceful lines in her portrait as it is sketched. So also in the nativity narratives. There can be no two opinions. Mary was the driving force. Hers the initiative throughout. The quality of her spirit can be appraised by remembering that in this undertaking to which she was setting herself, she had as adversary the collective and organized might of the Roman world. If ever the Holy Ghost came upon a woman and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, it was this valorous maid of Galilee quietly resolving in the sovereignty of her own soul to upheave an empire.

It seems that a formal wedding had not taken place. This is unfortunate. True, there had been a betrothal, which gave a religious sanction; the sacred and real part of marriage had been complied with — "Mary, his espoused wife." Nevertheless it is better that no bedrites be paid until the wedlock has been publicly solemnized. The confusion that has arisen in the present instance is a case in point. It is safe to state that no other disregard of the rules of conventionality has ever occasioned the mental sweat which the present one has occasioned to the thinkers of Christendom. This squeamishness does not seem to have been shared by Mary herself, for she openly owned Joseph as the child's parent: "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." However the news of the affair having become published — there were gossiping housewives in Nazareth — it was from early times felt needful to explain it away. And the confusion seen in the gospel accounts is the result. No entirely coherent narrative can be extracted from the records as they stand: our only resource has been to take

that interpretation which harmonizes the greatest number of statements and has the fewest contradictions.

It is a relief to leave that shadowy region where at best can be only conjecture — the transmission of life has ever been a mystic, a miraculous thing, and will always be — and get at once to where our feet are on solid ground. This we obtain at the moment Mary knows that within her a child is gestating. For she thereupon composed a song. It is the greatest song in history. This "Magnificat" is the battle-hymn of democracy. Sensing a child within her, Mary feels herself equal to the Roman Empire; and she announces that the days of despotism are numbered. Cæsar on his seven-hilled throne may sacrilegiously style himself Augustus, "the divine one." But Mary as confidently disallows him that title. Heaven is not on the side of privilege and oppression, she affirms, but is rather on the side of the trodden. Rome is great, but Galilee with God is greater. In this song three classes of people are objects of Our Lady's invective — "the proud," "the mighty," and "the rich." And she passes upon them a threefold sentence: they are to be "scattered," "put down from their seats," and "sent empty away." While the "hungry" are to be "filled with good things," and the oppressed classes are to be "holpen." Jesus, in that pronunciamento of his later, "the first shall be last and the last first," was a plagiarist from his mother, dating from these days of the umbilicus.

It may strike some readers, wonted to the smooth decorums of a hyper-civilized and artificial age, that Mary in this almost bloodthirsty proclamation is overstepping

the bounds of feminine retirement. But this fails to take account of the aboriginal energy of spirit in that Jewish blood. Galilee was the intense heart of the most intense race ever known. This was moreover at Israel's crisal hour, her age-long martyrdom come to its coronation in one last stand against the enemy. It was the golden moment in history, the highest peak which the human spirit has climbed in its march across the centuries. If Mary had been the conventional, the starchly decorous creature which some would prefer her to have been, Christianity would never have been born. Her child was to be called upon to do a titan's work, and needed a mother whose spirit was likewise cast in the titan mould.

If the churches of the well-off and privileged class realized the social dynamite that is concealed in this hymn composed by The Carpenter's mother, they would expurgate it from their liturgies forthwith. The burst of insurrection rumbles through it like the interior fires of a volcano. It is prolific in Magna Chartas. It is a declaration of independence from every form of slavishness.

> My soul doth magnify the Lord;
> For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
> His mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.
> He hath showed strength with his arm;
> He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
> He hath put down the mighty from their seats.
> And exalted them of low degree.
> He hath filled the hungry with good things;
> And the rich he hath sent empty away.
> He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy.

"The Marseillaise" of the ancient world! And this hymn of revolution, pulsing with hatred of oppressors and with fellow-feeling for all the oppressed ones of

earth, was composed and sung by Mary while she was carrying Jesus underneath her heart. Holy mother of God, from henceforth in very deed all generations shall call thee blessed.

And so it was that the days were accomplished; and she brought forth her first-born son and laid him in a manger. Manger! Jesus belongs to the proletariat by birthright. For this nativity in a cattle shed was typical of a life that was lived democratically throughout. In cities round about were Roman grandees, vassal kings, patrician magnates. Rich with the spoil of half a continent, they accounted the toiling masses to be but cattle — and housed them as cattle. He who was to arouse the masses to a demand for human rights was born in a stable side by side with oxen.

As his eyes blinked to the light of day, the future Carpenter saw in that Syrian village the Roman "System" now for the first time operating on a world scale. It was the occasion of the "tax" spoken of before, that booty which Rome was proceeding to lift from a defenceless peasantry. This Bethlehem event is sometimes referred to as a census. But the census was to serve as the basis of a poll tax which now was to be added to the other taxes that were on the backs of the people:

> The simple rule, the good old plan,
> That he should take who has the might,
> And he shall keep who can.

Habitually near to the starvation line lived the peasantry of that time. The people in this particular province had already been bled to the verge by Herod, Rome's toady and vassal. This further spoliation, therefore,

meant bread out of many a mouth. The brigands on the Tiber, however, had thoughtfully provided for every emergency. There was a Roman law that a parent could sell his infant into slavery, if the money was needed to pay the tax. Some of the mothers in that Bethlehem crowd, therefore, must at that moment have been lifting up very sharp cries, because their babes had been sold to raise the necessary money.

The shepherds were a set upon whom the tax fell with an especially cruel pressure, for they were the poorest class in Palestine. They slept in the fields with their flocks. Their clothing was of the scantiest, their persons rude and unkempt because of the nature of their occupation, and their food supply at all times precarious. This poll tax, therefore, coming now on top of all the other booty which they were being periodically separated from, fell with crushing weight. It seriously reduced the number of sheep in their flocks, and meant short rations throughout the residue of the winter. Even in our own country, taxes are paid with begrudgment; from which one can judge the feelings wherewith the "tax" in the present instance was paid. For the enormous sums of money thus raised were to be sent out of the country—the impoverishment of those already poor for the enrichment of those already rich. Therefore we can readily credit the report that it was good tidings to the shepherds encamped on the plans outside Bethlehem, when they heard that a Deliverer was being born to them.

The tax was finally "accomplished." But only by the burning of villages and the slaughter of hundreds.

Rhapsodists have sought decorously to gild this Bethlehem picture:

> "O little town of Bethlehem,
> How still we see thee lie!
> Above thy deep and dreamless sleep,
> The silent stars go by."

But those silent stars looked down on a scene that was anything but peaceful and idyllic. Poetry must be sought in other directions than the ecstatic. For the economic background thrusts insistently into view — refuses to remain glossed over. That Bethlehem town is far from "still" on the night in question. Nor is its slumber "deep and dreamless." A mood of interrogation is upon the people — an angry, bitter, venomous mood. They are asking by what right this decree is issuing from the Tiber, "that all the world should be taxed." It is an interrogation that will not down. Groups of angry men, husbands and fathers, gather on the street corners, gesticulating in fashion that is ominous. Gatherings on street corners are bad for despotism in all ages. The Roman cohorts have learned an effective way to end gatherings on street corners; they employ this method now. The captain of the garrison near by issues an order. The soldiery of Rome and of her menial, Herod, are set in motion. They put an end to gatherings on the street corners. And the Syrian stars that night looked down upon corpses in the streets — men who that morning were heads of families, but who made the mistake of asking questions. Daughters and young wives, now that their natural protectors are out of the way, become spoils of conquest for the soldiery. Even babes feel the Roman

ferocity. The night is vocal with rage and anguish — "lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

We are certified that Mary "pondered all these things in her heart." For the money that was being pillaged from this working-class population was to be forwarded to Italy to make a Roman holiday. And we may be sure that Mary knew something of Rome's idea as to what a holiday should be. She had been brought up in a cosmopolitan district. Galilee lay across the great trade routes of the world. Nazareth looked down upon the highway between the Mediterranean ports and Damascus. Caravans traversed that route, trafficking between Europe and Asia. Soldiers of all nations, merchants, proconsuls, legates, gilded nobles in their chairs of state with fifty outriders, travelled the highway and kept it a beaten thoroughfare. It was called "Galilee of the Nations," because so closely in touch with the world outside of Jewry. The Galileans took a passionate interest in public affairs. And in the exchange of news around the village well in Nazareth, morning and night, Mary heard tales of the extravagances in Rome, made possible by the spoil of a hundred provinces.

Life in the Imperial City was becoming one long holiday, even for the rabble, due to the now almost daily distribution of bread and the circus. This had been a stipulation in the concordat which we gazed at in the first chapter. In the time of the Gracchi the plebs had been a self-respecting if brutal folk — they had demanded their share of the commonwealth, and had waged long civil

wars for the same. But Augustus and his empire introduced a new idea — the patricians and the plebs were to strike hands, and together live on the backs of the slaves and of the natives in the provinces. Thus the delectable end of civil wars in Rome — the Pax Romana! Accordingly, the largess to Rome's populace now of wheat, pork, olive oil, and wine, betokened no large-heartedness on the part of the patrician donors; these doles were a part of the contract, whereby "peace" was secured — at the price of the enslavement of sixty million toilers. It was the same principle whereby Athens had put an end to her internecine broils by doles of show money and beeves to her free populace.

So, now, by the Tiber. Toil in the provinces and by her slave class was so unremitting that Rome needed not to toil. She established nearly a hundred fête days for each year, with lavish games in the arena. Julius had set the rabble agape by presenting wild animals in silver cages; he turned into the arena four hundred lions at once, for mutual slaughter. Octavius, in the epitaph he prepared for himself, mentions that at his own expense he gave exhibitions in which thirty-five hundred gladiators met their death. As a variety, women and dwarfs were made to fight together. In the amphitheatrical duels, if any gladiator went hesitant to the fray, he was driven on by red-hot irons, with a "Give it to him" from the spectators — "Adhibite! Adhibite!" Rome encouraged this blood lust in her people — a brutal populace makes a formidable soldiery. At the amphitheatre, to see the killings, the vestal virgins had a box of honour. Naked women swam in basins in the sanded floor, in the presence

of spectators of every age and sex. Combats of gladiators entertained the private banquets of the rich, so that the blood of the slaves imported from the provinces literally mingled with the wine on the boards. Alternating with these were voluptuous dances and pantomimes. The guests at these banquets were offered as part of the repast the kisses of slave girls — many of them girls taken by force from their homes under Syrian skies. The provinces had become the feeding ground of a Rome given over to gluttony and sensual excess. Says Froude: "The endurance of the inequalities of life by the poor is the marvel of human society." And when we read his description of social conditions in Rome, contrasted with the lot of the working class in the provinces, we indeed marvel that the masses endured as patiently as they did, and that the revolution which, from Galilee as its centre, finally broke out, did not break out sooner. For Froude's picture will be accepted. He ever speaks forth the words of truth and soberness.

The soil of Italy was fast passing into the hands of a few territorial magnates. The conquest of the world had turned the flower of the defeated nation into slaves. The prisoners, taken either after a battle or when cities surrendered unconditionally, were bought up steadily by contractors. Rome's once hardy mode of living degenerated into grossness. The Romans ceased to believe. The spiritual quality was gone out of them, and the high society of Rome became a society of powerful animals with an enormous appetite for pleasure. Wealth poured in more and more, and luxury grew more unbounded. Palaces sprang up in the city, castles in the country, villas

at pleasant places by the sea, with parks and fish-ponds and game preserves and gardens and vast retinues of servants. When natural pleasures had been indulged in to satiety, pleasures which were against nature were imported from the East to stimulate the exhausted appetite. Money was the one thought. Governors held their provinces for one, two, or three years; they went out bankrupt from extravagance, they returned with millions for fresh riot. To obtain a province was the first ambition of a Roman noble. The commonwealth was a plutocracy. The rich were happy in the possession of all that they could desire.

All of which things Mary kept, and pondered in her heart. For she was of the thinker type. The vibration of these world events swept the chords of her soul. She could not have escaped the vibrations had she wished: for she was more than an onlooker; she was a participant. The sword of the Roman cohort, collecting booty everywhere on the inhabited earth, was piercing her own soul also. The rapacity of Rome and the Romanized Herod was taking pretty much all the living from that Nazareth home. Meat had left the table long ago. Now the meal in the family barrel was also running low. The record definitely affirms the poverty of this household. During the ceremony, "to present him to the Lord," the parents of Jesus offered for sacrifice "two young pigeons," instead of the usual gift. This was a special dispensation made by Jewish law — ever thoughtful of the poor — to those who were in penury: a young woman, "if she be not able to bring a lamb, shall bring two turtles or two young pigeons." The destitution of this Nazareth house-

hold must have been extreme, because it became a tradition, so that we find Paul referring to "his poverty," as to an everywhere understood and accepted fact. Nor does the family ever seem to have emerged out of this condition of hardship and exhausting toil. Eusebius states that two of the grand-nephews of Jesus — grandsons of his brother Jude — on being summoned before the Emperor Domitian, mollified the bitterness of that potentate against them by showing their hands horned from hard labour.

But though food is scarce, Mary must keep life going; because a babe is sucking at her breasts. Therefore herbs must be gathered and stewed into pottage — a humiliating diet for a nursing mother. And her thoughts turn to those all-night banquets at Rome and Cæsarea, where because of the so great excess of good things, the tantalized eaters resort to emetics in order that their gullets may be titillated with gormandizing a second time — Vomunt ut edunt; edunt ut vomunt. The thought of it makes her bitter. She minds it not so much on her own account. But the starvation diet is thinning the milk in her breasts. A woman never so revolts against an unjust economic system with its skimpy nourishment, as when she is become a mother, and the asking eyes of a babe look into hers, a babe asking nutriment which it gets not.

Wherefore the resolve in her soul becomes more set. We have seen that the "Magnificat" predestined the child before birth to a work of social reconstruction. Now also, that babe is drawing a spirit of insurrection in with the milk from his mother's teats. For that milk had been

curdled by the thought of injustice,—these so steep inequalities in human fortune, whereby a part of mankind was in the depths and another part on the too intoxicating heights. Rome's sycophant, Herod, was enjoying an income of two million dollars a year, a fortune whose size for that time can be estimated by comparing it with the wage of a day labourer, "thy penny a day." We shall see in Jesus later a fierceness of aggression against the despoilers of the people. Some of the seeds of that fierce energy were being implanted in his soul while he was in swaddling bands. He knew it not at the time, but there was distilling into the soul of the babe, as he dug his face into his mother's breasts, a resolution to put down the mighty from their seats, to fill the hungry with good things, and to exalt them of low degree.

CHAPTER III

A CARPENTER

"The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit." It seems that already something of his mother's energy and high-heartedness is being made over unto him.

He received the usual education of a Jewish boy at the village school. He "increased in wisdom,"—appropriating the hived knowledge of the past, for his mental commissariat. Israel was the democratic nation of antiquity; like all democracies she stressed popular education. "Our ground is good," said Josephus the Jew, "and we work it to the utmost, but our chief ambition is for the education of our children." The text-book in the Jewish schools was the Old Testament. It is a library rather than a single book. Its writings are tied together by a strain which runs through them all — a fierce determination of independence. Probably no other collection of books contains in equal compass so explosive a social dynamic. The effect of putting it as a text-book into their public schools, even into those of the elementary grades, goes far to account for the impassioned democracy of the Jews as a race, seen to this day.

Besides book learning, Jesus as a boy was receiving through eye-gate and ear-gate a knowledge of world affairs. For he witnessed the insurrection under Judas of Galilee. Stung to madness by the imperturbable ad-

vance of absolutism, the Galilean masses rise in a burst of fury. Ill-timed. Rome, infinite in oppression, issues a quiet command to Varus. He mobilizes two legions on Galilee's tiny spot of earth. The rebellion is crushed by sheer weight of soldiery. From the heights above Nazareth, Jesus as a boy looks down nightly upon the fire of burning villages. Two thousand malcontents are crucified. By day the boy sees along every road these victims, lifted on crosses about two feet above the ground — purposely no higher than that, for it is Rome's command that the victims be left near enough to the ground for the wild beasts at night to leap up and tear their vitals. Some of these victims were doubtless known to the boy Jesus personally; for Galilee was a small district, and its people closely knit. The lad undoubtedly received some last messages concerning the Roman from delirious dying lips as he passed these crosses beside every path and highway — a fact well to remember when we are reading some of his fiercely bitter utterances later, against those who invade and oppress the people.

It appears that early in life he became an apprentice under his father. He entered upon the trade of a carpenter, and we shall hear from his lips when he is become a teacher, allusions to his craft — "the splinter and the beam," "the green wood and the dry." Moreover, he seems to have taken to this career of hand-labour willingly, regarding it as his natural lot. During a visit to Jerusalem about this time, he lingered there after his parents had started homeward. Turning back, they recovered him. In their reproof they seem to have charged him with a lurking desire to abandon working-

class Galilee and break into Jerusalem's aristocratic set with its haughty culture and its contempt of the common people. But he repudiates the notion with some heat. He assures them that, in lingering behind to talk with the rabbis in the Temple, his spirit had not been ensorceried by the splendours of the capital; and that he had cherished no other thought than to go back to lower-class Galilee, where the people though poor, were vigorous, brave, and freedom-loving, and take up his father's business, that of a carpenter. "How is it that ye sought me?" The narrator, or some marginal annotator of later date, states that there was an occult meaning in these words, which his parents failed to catch. But this seems a gratuitous charge of denseness on their part, and especially upon Mary, who is nowhere portrayed as being slow of understanding. So he went back to Nazareth. He became a carpenter. He took his place among the world's workers.

His occupation as a carpenter brought him intimately into the lives of the people. The trades were not then specialized as they have become to-day. The carpenter did practically all of the constructive work, both within and without the house. He was called upon to make everything, from the rocker of the cradle to the bier of burial. An admirer of Julian the Apostate, at a time when the Christian tradition seemed overthrown, taunted a follower of the Nazarene with the taunt, "What is The Carpenter doing now?" "He is making a coffin," was the reply. Julian's death soon thereafter preserved the anecdote. It is of interest as a sidelight on the work of a carpenter in ancient times. He was the tool maker, and fashioned the rude instruments with which the farmer

worked his field. Justyn Martyr speaks of Jesus as having made "ploughs and yokes." The carpenter was also the cabinet-maker of the day, and built the crude household furniture. He had to fell his own logs in the mountains, saw them into beams by hand, and drag them laboriously back to the village. The axe is a familiar instrument in the Old Testament; it is the tool of peace and the weapon of war. We meet it at the threshold of the Gospels. And here now, in his carpenter days, we see Jesus, a wood-cutter in the mountains, "as men that lifted up axes upon a thicket of trees."

The work of a country carpenter necessitates constant journeyings. Joseph and his son in their work-travels together probably covered much of the Galilee district. In his public career later, we find Jesus circulating among the towns surrounding Nazareth, as among friends. These friendships must have been cemented during his journeys as a workman, and while fitting the planks for a neighbour's door. His reputation as a skilled artisan also must have helped to prepare him a welcome and a hearing when he came to those homes as a teacher. For Jesus was a master of his craft. No man can take pride in his work except that work be done with efficiency and conscience. And Jesus took pride in his work. In that saying of his, unearthed in the recently discovered papyri, he makes reference to his days as a carpenter with a resonancy and a joyousness that are unmistakable: "Raise the stone and thou shalt find me: cleave the wood and there I am also" — words reminiscent of this time in his life when he piled stones for the foundation of a building, and split logs into beams. He even seems to have taken pride

in the workmanlike qualities of his father, and of his descent from artisan loins: "My father worketh hitherto, and I work." It is true that this is to splinter off the passage in question from its context. But there is justification for this use of the Gospel records. Those records lay no claim to continuity. In the form in which they have come down to us they are memorabilia, a collection of sayings gathered up from the original auditors years after his death. In many cases the connection has been hopelessly lost, and can be restored only by a free process of selection, piercing the broken torso out of fragments. We need not enter into the disputes which rage around corrupted passages. A portrait of The Carpenter shall not be arrived at by a microscopism of the text, but rather by the set and drift of the records as a whole. His was not the logical temperament, fastening link to link. His outgivings impress one as the ejecta of a volcanic nature, the pressure behind being too explosive to pause for unity.

And in this matter of the workmanlike quality of this carpenter, we are not left in doubt. In an unmistakable passage we behold in him the kind of builder whose motto was "thorough." He "foundationed" his houses "upon the rock." "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." In a limestone country such as Palestine, a rock foundation can be obtained almost anywhere, if the builder is but dogged and "digs deep"; and the underwash of rainstorms has then no power to terrify. He had the true workman's contempt for the "fool man" who, to save expense, tells his work-

men to skimp the foundations. In the address from which these words are taken, Jesus was speaking to an audience of his Galilean neighbours, who would quickly have pointed it out if his own record as a builder had not squared with the kind of a carpenter he was describing. Further, his, "Take my yoke upon you," hints a tool maker who shaped his ox yokes with painstaking care so as to fit smoothly onto the neck, and who took honest pride in the fact. A number of his disciples were intimately known to him before he entered upon his public career. The fact that they responded willingly when he summoned them to enlist under him for the Cause, is eloquent of the respect he must have inspired in them back in his carpenter days. Furthermore, we find in him a fine scorn of unworkmanlike qualities in men of other trades. To plough a straight furrow requires in a ploughman that he fix his eye on some objective point, and steer toward it. To be glancing carelessly around betrays itself in crooked and uneven furrows when the work is done. Jesus declares that he had no use for such a man, one who, "having put his hand to the plough, looks back." The accumulation of evidence is unmistakable: The Carpenter of Nazareth was "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

When he emerged from his wage-earner period, there was noticeable in him an inalienable dignity, matured within him by years of acknowledged mastership as a workman. This inwrought sense of mastery tells in his every move. The hinges of his knee had never been oiled with the oil of cringing. His eye possessed power. This working-class agitator had a way of beholding a

person in silence. And the trait must have been characteristic. For we read frequently, "He looked upon them, and said —" His port spelt the majesty of self-respect. He even enjoins it upon his disciples, warning them against mean-spiritedness. Sending them on a propagandist tour, he tells them that in each village they enter they are to claim hostelry at the chief house: "Inquire who in it is worthy." And any house closing its door against them writes itself down thereby as the abode of stupidity. He himself glanced up at many a westering sun, without knowing where he would lay his head that night. Nevertheless no wealth of hospitality could warp him as guest from straightest truth-telling. "Master, we know that thou art true, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men." Oft-times he invited himself to a night's lodging, and it was always with the air of conferring a favour. Now and then the overture was rejected; whereupon he concealed not his contemptuous pity at their lack of insight — "let the dead bury their dead." In him never a touch of fawning flattery. His bearing throughout was that of a spirited labourer, who had been accustomed to doing an honest day's work and demanding an honest day's pay. He bristled at any faintest squint of charity: "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

For eighteen years Jesus worked thus as a day labourer. We find him ever afterward identifying himself with the working class. Passages like, "which of you intending to build"; "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the

morning to hire labourers"; "the burden and heat of the day"; "no man hath hired us"; and the references to the patching of worn garments and hewing down trees for firewood, give evidence of a working-class consciousness. We find him mentioning the moth and rust as two of the serious distressments of life, hinting thereby of a household in Nazareth so near to the poverty line that the moth worm, eating the only garment in the chest, or rust cankering the solitary and priceless tool on which livelihood depended, were disasters which swelled sometimes into tragedy. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," is the articulate sigh of the proletariat of the ancient world worked to the point of exhaustion, and for whom the zest of life has well-nigh evaporated.

Nor was this alignment of himself on the side of the toiler and the lowly, a pose on his part. It is easy to prate of equality; demagogues affect it as one of the tricks of the trade. But in Jesus the proletary accent was no affectation. It was the unconscious mind of one born and bred to a life of manual labour. All of his disciples were workingmen. One of the charges of the Pharisees against him was that he did not sufficiently encourage fastings. The explanation is, that to him and his band a slender diet was the ordinary state; they needed not for their soul's welfare the artificial abstemiousness of the Pharisees. The cultured class some centuries later seized upon The Carpenter and appropriated him for their own. Naturally, to these, the only portion of his life that had aught of interest was his career as a teacher. Hence it has come about that the traditional biographies of Jesus are confined to the last three years of his life.

But through a period of six times three years he earned his bread sweatingly, knowing at first hand the sorrows of labour and acquainted with its grief. During this long period his fellow townsmen apparently detected no other trait in him save that of a workingman. For they express an unfeigned surprise when he starts out in another guise: "Is not this the carpenter?"

Moreover, in laying aside his mechanic's apron for the teacher's cloak, there was no real break. The two careers were one. It was because his work as an artisan was being brought to naught by the industrial despotism that like a creeping paralysis was advancing upon the country, that he set out to arouse the people against that despotism. As a teacher he was still the workingman — a summons to workingmen to arouse against Rome's domination which was a menace everywhere to workingmen. For conditions were fast becoming impossible to a free and self-respecting artisan. The industrial life which the Roman Empire was riveting upon the world was based on slavery. This economic tragedy lay hidden at the heart of the ancient world. Without an understanding of it, one shall not enter into the words and works of Jesus.

First along, slavery had been the result of war, the prisoners taken in battle being shipped to the markets and sold as slaves. But the Romans, with their excessive "practicality," soon improved on this. From being the result, they turned it into the cause of war. For they had found that the sale of the prisoners not only paid the expenses of a campaign, but usually left a tidy sum over as profit. Many students declare that business today is war. With Rome, war was business. Often her

chief interest in a campaign was the kind of slaves which would be sent in from the front. A war in the territories of Greece was popular and easily found financial backing, because the prisoners captured there usually had good looks and some literary or artistic skill. We find Cicero in one of his letters complaining that Cæsar's campaign in Britain would bring only an illiterate class of slaves into the market. Contractors followed up the Roman armies and after each battle bought the prisoners. Auctions on the battlefields were conducted by the military quæstors, representing the State. The sums obtained from these sales can be estimated from the fact that, during his campaign in Gaul, Cæsar on one occasion alone sold fifty-three thousand slaves, replenishing thereby his war chest. In Epirus, Paulus Amelius sold one hundred and fifty thousand. After the victories of Lucullus in Pontus, the prisoners were so numerous that the price fell to about eighty cents a head.

The slave shops in Rome, in the Via Sacra, Via Suburra, and at the Temple of Castor, were busy daily, taking care of these streams of human property that were pouring in from the provinces. The ædiles supervised these sales, in order to collect the state tax of 4 per cent. of the slave's purchase price. These ædiles regulated the traffic, guaranteed the purchasers against fraud, and issued edicts to that end. For the slave dealers — brokers in human flesh — were experts in improving the physical appearance of their slaves for purposes of sale. Leanness was common among them (not strange, considering that the drink of slaves was a kind of wine, of which vinegar and sea-water were the chief constituents).

Terebinth was therefore rubbed on their bodies to relax the skin and cause the flesh to appear plumper. Means were employed to delay the age of puberty, or to cause slaves to retain as long as possible the appearance of youth. Buyers sometimes sought the advice of veterinary surgeons to pronounce upon the physical conditions of a slave before purchasing. The commoner slaves were exhibited in gangs in the market place. The more valuable sort were kept in cages or wooden booths, where they could be examined minutely and at leisure. Before the moment of auction the dealer caused his slaves to display their strength in lifting heavy weights, running, leaping, etc.; and also their accomplishments, if any, such as reading and writing.

Roman law severely punished frauds in the transaction. The seller was compelled to state the vices or diseases of the slave. Defective eyesight or hearing, epilepsy, phthisis, varicose veins, habits of idleness, fits of cowardice or bad temper, a dull mentality, gave the purchaser the right to return the slave and get his money back. Purchasers were especially warned against buying slaves who might be suffering from nervous diseases. An edict declared it a fraud to offer for sale a slave who had ever attempted suicide. Another bar to a sale was melancholy (how harsh soever the treatment he meted out, a Roman master felt grievously injured if the slave became melancholy under it and so reduced his selling price). The most searching inquiries were made from slave dealers as to any restive tendencies displayed by the slave, and especially as to his records of attempts to escape. The letter "F" branded on the brow of a recovered fugitive

meant that he would bring the lowest price in the market. Varro says that agricultural implements are divided into three classes: (1) those which are articulate, that is to say, slaves; (2) those which are semi-articulate, such as oxen; (3) those which are inarticulate, such as wagons. Slaves in the Italian vineyards had to be robust and intelligent. As these qualities would render them dangerous, the vine dressers were made to work in chains. Every estate had a prison in which disobedient slaves were punished. Professional slave catchers went after runaways. Sometimes the feet of a recaptured slave were amputated. Cicero tells of a slave whose tongue was cut out before he was crucified, lest he should divulge from the cross the crimes of his mistress. Slaves for use as gladiators were hired for three dollars a show, with an indemnity to the owner in case of death. There were contractors who made a specialty of slaves intended for use as gladiators. Rich estates had families of gladiators, and felt themselves honoured by the number of famous fighters turned out from their "string," much as the owner of a racing stud to-day is known by the prize winners from his stable. The litter of a rich Roman was carried by special bearers — lecticarii — and it was the fashionable fad to choose these from Syria or Asia Minor. The majority of male and female musicians in Rome had also been taken from Syria. It was found that slaves taken from that province were subtle, ingenious, and possessed of a thousand dexterities. They therefore furnished a large bulk of the dancers, rope-walkers, mimics, and mistresses, who ministered pleasure to these barbaric Westerners, drunk with an excess of blood and

energy. Other "human implements" were torch-bearers, to light the way of their masters through the lampless streets. The number of slaves held by the Romans — about two thirds of the population of the city of Rome were slaves — can be estimated from the number, four thousand, who were massacred in one house at a stroke. The Emperor Trajan during a carnival sent ten thousand slaves into the arena.

Not strange, therefore, that the provinces were constantly being ransacked to supply the slave markets in Rome with these "articulate instruments." Rome was rich: but only with the riches of successful brigandage. She was not a producer of wealth. She was an annexer of the wealth produced by others. Her literature betrays contempt for artisan labour. Her very word for property — mancipium — meant, "that which has been seized by the hand." To work the workers, to farm the farmers — this was her deliberate, her conscious programme. Said Cicero: "We admire a rich purple dye, but we despise the dyer as a vile artisan." And he asks, "What honourable thing can come out of a shop?" The inevitable thing, in a civilization based on slavery. Both Plato and Aristotle regarded mechanical toil as derogatory to the status of a citizen. Said the former: "Nature has made no shoemaker nor smith. Such occupations degrade the people who exercise them." Reasoned Aristotle: "There are in the human species individuals as inferior to others as animals are to men. Destined by nature to slavery, there is nothing better for them." Xenophon was at pains to state: "The arts

that are called mechanical are also, and naturally, held in bad repute in our cities." And he explains: "The people who give themselves up to manual labour are never promoted to public office, and with good reason. The greater part of them, condemned to be seated the whole day long, some even to endure the heat of the fire continually, cannot fail to be changed in body, and it is almost inevitable that the mind be affected." In Rome the one avenue to esteem was successful rapacity. Her empire can be likened to a huge wolf, the jaw and fangs of which were her far-flung legions, with the city of Rome as the belly of the beast into which the rich morsels flowed after they had been sufficiently pulverized by the molars and grinders.

There are those who would admire Jesus more if he had left world politics alone. But world politics would not leave him alone. He, his kindred, his fellow countrymen, were exposed hourly to the press-gang, with its summons into the unspeakable conditions in the slave stable of some Roman lord. Daily the collar was riveting about his own neck. To have asked him to concern himself only with "religion" and to let world politics alone, would be like asking a person to forget a pack of wolves leaping at him with a three months' hunger gnawing their vitals. Economic despotism is a fire which a people must put out or it will put them out. The Old Testament preachers had shown up the puerility of crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. Jesus declared war on the capitalism of his day, because capitalism was declaring war on him. Rome's arm reached easily into Syria, and was ever drawing off the flower of

its population into her slave kennels. During his boyhood Jesus had seen the entire population of Sepphoris, a town near Nazareth, sold by the Romans into slavery. Only fifty years before, Rome had captured thirty thousand Jews and made them into slaves. And less than two score years after Jesus' death she sent her armies into Palestine and carried away one hundred thousand of his fellow countrymen into slavery. These instances were the result of war, does some one object? But war was precisely Rome's way of supplying her slave markets. Be a province never so peaceably minded, the moment Rome's market needed more slaves, a casus belli was readily found. For with the Romans, war was business — entered upon from business motives and conducted on strictly business principles. Her wars were freebooting raids. And no province in the empire realized this more poignantly than Syria and Galilee. Jesus announced as his mission, "to preach deliverance to the slaves." He foretold the fate which stared his nation in the face: "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away slaves into all nations." And his words draw a picture of the nightmare terror that was upon every home, as the Roman slave-catchers drew near: "There shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

The attitude of a self-respecting Jew toward Rome was quite what would have been the attitude of an intelligent and educated negro in the South before the war,

or in Africa exposed to the merciless approach of Arab slave dealers. For Rome denied to her subject peoples every human right. A slave's only security against ill-treatment was his market value. As he became old, therefore, this safeguard slowly fell from around him. At auctions old slaves had no selling value, and were often thrown into the bargain for good measure. Inasmuch as the keep of a slave was about a hundred dollars a year, whereas the average price of a new slave was seventy-five, a Roman owner often found it more "practical" to kill an old slave than to keep on feeding him. In case of a tedious sickness, likewise, it was often cheaper for the owner to put the slave to death — like a horse with a broken leg — than to nurse him through a long convalescence. There was an island in the Tiber where sick slaves were exposed. The slave door-keepers in great houses were chained to the door-posts, and were sold with the house, as forming in a way part of the wall. Terribly familiar was the cut of thongs on their faces. In country districts, where victuals were cheap, the breeding of slaves for the market was practised. Slaves were also used in war, being thus compelled to assist in bringing new slaves into the market, and thereby cheapening their own value. Not long ago the Esquiline Cemetery was excavated, and there was discovered a pit one thousand feet long and three hundred feet deep. We have Peterson's authority that this was an ancient burial ground for slaves, who were thrown into it along with the carcasses of animals and the refuse of the city.

He should have escaped the vortex of world politics? Jesus could not escape that vortex. This carpenter family

in Nazareth was one of Rome's assets, and could no more have dodged the enrolment lists of the empire than a horse could disappear from the account books of a carefully conducted landed estate and the fact not be noted. If the empire allowed the members of that family to remain as freemen, it was only that it might tax their free labour, and with the sword of possible slavery constantly over their heads. A paid spy dom watched that Nazareth family — as it watched every other working-class family in the empire — and if by extraordinary saving they had put aside a sum against sickness or old age, it would have been taken from them, if necessary at the point of the sword. Jesus used this as an argument against engrossment by his fellow countrymen in piling up wealth: "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (The eagle was Rome's military insignium, and was borne at the head of her cohorts.) There was no incentive to thrift, but encouragement rather to an improvident, hand-to-mouth existence. Significant is Luke's version of the prayer that Jesus recommended to his disciples, "Give us day by day our daily bread."

In addition to war, debt was a gateway into slavery. By Roman law a debt running over thirty days put the man into the hands of the creditor until the debt was paid. By order of the magistrate he was removed to the creditor's house, imprisoned there, and chained. It was stipulated that the chains with which he was loaded should not weigh more than fifteen pounds. The insolvent person was publicly exposed on three consecutive market days, and the amount of the debt declared. If no payer

came, the person could then be sold into slavery. As a freeman could be impressed to serve his overlord in a military campaign, this might happen at the period of greatest economic inconvenience — in the case of a carpenter, during the working season of the year. The freeman would thereupon return from the campaign to find himself and family hopelessly in debt. The slightest accident, an industrial stoppage for a few weeks, would often be enough to sink at least one member of the family below the line of freemen and into the servile class from which few ever emerged. We detect some bitter experience, perhaps of a near kinsman or friend, in the graphic description of Jesus: "When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite."

The workingman who escaped these two high-roads leading into slavery, namely war and debt, was not thereby out of danger. He was slowly crushed by another pressure, from which was no escape. This was the competition whereby slave labour dragged free labour ever down to its own level. It was the custom of a slave owner to let out his slaves by the day. Thus slave metal workers, slave carpenters, slave shoemakers, would be hired out at so much a day, as working horses are hired out in our time. A slave could be maintained for less than a freeman, because his food was little more than bran and vinegar, his clothing often but a clout

around the loins — not always even that — his sleeping place at night a stable under the ground; and there was no provision needed for old age, since it was intended that the slave should die before he became old, the average working life of the slave class, as a matter of fact, being eight years. Therefore he could work for less than the freeman. But the free artisan had to sell his labour in the same market. Therefore, the iron law of competition. The wages of the freeman steadily approached the lower level, a level just sufficient to supply him also with bran and vinegar, an underground stable at night, a clout around his loins — and this, only during a lifetime of eight years. It was the law that worked so hardly on the poor whites in the South, during the days of slavery; but the poor whites in the South had the colour line, which operated as an automatic check against their engulfment as slaves; while in Nazareth there was no such colour line. Thus the free Galilean poor, ground between the capitalist class and the slave class as between two millstones, gravitated toward slavery by a universal gravitation. It was the old law — the slow crushing out of the middle class, in an industrial system based on exploitation; the rich tending to become richer, the poor tending to become poorer. Jesus spoke out of his own gruelling experience as a wage earner, when he described the times as one in which, "to him which hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but from him which hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

Asia was to the Romans a gold mine. The Romans about now were in need of a gold mine. Southern Italy was shattered by the civil wars. Northern Italy was

crude, and only at the beginning of its development. The expeditions of Lucullus and Pompey to Asia, some time before this, had brought back large sums, which had enabled Rome to live a roaring life. But by now this treasure had been dissipated. As her funds ran low, her appetites ran high. It was an era of spendthriftness. Roman matrons vied with each other in sumptuous display. There was a fanatical haste to acquire wealth and to enjoy it. All classes were bitten with the craze of ostentation. Expenditure outran income. A barbaric fervour arose for the things which money will buy. Credit notes were given at high usury. Riotous living wove its web of extravagance — a network of debt which enmeshed the whole of Italy.

In contrast with this raw and barbarous West, was the East with its long-standing civilizations, its wealth and industry and arts. Here were great manufacturing towns, great commercial routes, important centres of learning and of a vigorous intellectual life. Not only were her districts enormous in area; they were also populous, wealthy, fertile, rich in ancient culture. Here were busy centres of industry, cities of teeming commerce. The East was the home of the fibre-bearing plants — the cotton, the hemp, the flax. There were great weaving factories, purple-dyeing centres of wide renown. Her textile craftsmen made coverings of embroidered wool and curtains of gold-shot fabrics. Her forges were busy turning out weapons, files, hammers, and articles of wrought iron and beaten metal. Her bronze foundries were active, and the workshops of her artists. Is it any wonder that Italy turned in this

direction and away from the cold, gray skies of northern Europe?

Asia became Rome's El Dorado. Italian adventurers, bankrupt through extravagance at home, sought here to restore their fortunes, and perchance to emulate the fabulous career of Alexander. An official appointment in Asia was eagerly sought by young Italians as a career of glorious piracy. Each year saw a shipload of these buccaneers unload on Asia's coast — friends of the newly appointed governor, petty functionaries, officers of the legions, their relatives and clients — and proceed to saddle themselves on the backs of the natives. A swarm of human locusts overrunning the land and devouring its substance! The exactions of Lucullus and Pompey, with the long-time drain of the great Italian corporations of tax farmers, had already bled the East to exhaustion. But these troops of greedy adventurers — a fresh horde each year — would not be denied. As the springs of wealth began to fail, they pressed their exactions by every refinement of rapacity. Enjoying the open patronage of the governor in their systematic pillage of a province, few were the devices either of fraud or of violence which their ingenuity left untried. Living in luxury at the expense of the people, and backed by a military despotism, they sold every sort of favour at exorbitant prices. There was a systematic application of violence. Let any householder resist, a word from the governor would set a cohort of soldiery loose upon his home, and, if need be, upon the entire village. Plundering a world to adorn their country-seats, young Italians, after a year or two in the East, would carry back litter loads of gold. Virtue

was not safe. These legalized freebooters, trooping over from Italy on buccaneering careers, demanded the right to enter any home, and take the wife, it might be, as a concubine. The soldiery backed the officials, and in return the officials gave to the soldiery an almost unlimited rein of license. "Legion" was Rome's name for her military units; in Palestine, the natives got to apply that term to signify devils. Italy, ruined by a hundred years of civil war, turned upon the East its insatiable maw for wealth and pleasure.

When the call of appetite was upon her, nothing to Rome was sacred. To provide for her gross and sensual pleasures, fair maidens were searched out from all nations, to pine in the slave quarters of the Roman lord. Jesus had sisters. Personal attractiveness was a trait in his family, for he is pictured as rarely winsome to people. Grace of form and face was there hereditary — artists have been guided by a sure instinct in universally picturing Mary as beautiful. His mother and brothers are mentioned throughout the record to the end. But his sisters suddenly disappear from the narrative, never to re-emerge. In their place we find in him as their eldest brother a fierceness of invective against the lustful and degrading rule which, like a continuation of Tiber's muddy stream, was overflooding a world with its defilement. So crushed had some of the natives become that they even came to count daughters an asset, as a means of possibly placating the raven of the invader. The context is lost so that we have only conjecture; but it must have been some exhibition of despotic rule more brutal than ordinary, to wring from the lips of The Carpenter

the epithets "swine-snouted" and "currish," as applied to the oppressors of the people: "give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine; lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Lest this picture of Roman pillage carried to the point of rape should be too gross to pass creditably into modern ears, Ferrero is summoned to the stand: "There was still, especially in Asia, much treasure to be won by Western enterprise. Capitalists were able to secure mortgages on future harvests, to seize statues, pictures and goldsmiths' work, houses, estates, public buildings, and finally the native inhabitants themselves, reducing to slavery all peasants who were unable to pay their debts, or accepting in lieu of payment the sons and daughters of their debtors."

Rome was a parasite on the face of the earth. Her stateliness was at the expense of impoverished hamlets such as Nazareth, dotting the landscape with their desolations. A hundred million were in penury, in order that two hundred thousand Romans might riot in sensuality and excess. The death of nations marked the trail of the Roman legions across the world. "Pax Romana!" The "Roman peace," vaunted in song and marble, was the peace of a world in death. Even Tacitus had to admit it: "where they make a desert they call it 'peace'."

Under such an industrialism, and amid social conditions of this stripe, Jesus tried for nearly a score of years to support himself and the family dependent upon him — Joseph seems to have died or been killed — by his craft as a carpenter. At last the fatal pressure of Roman

expansion put him upon action. That he endured the conditions so long, bespeaks a nature not given to restlessness nor chargeable with excitability. That he rebelled at last bespeaks the encroachment of an industrial servitude that was humanly impossible and that called for change.

CHAPTER IV

A WOMAN

THERE are three men in the New Testament who are notably outspoken against the economic oppressions of the day; and they are from the same family. They are Jesus, his younger brother James, and his cousin John Baptist. This must have been more than a coincidence. Such a constellation of dominant and similar orbs in the same part of the social heavens is by cause. It argues some central sun which conjointly threw them off, the flaming source of their flaming orbits.

Jesus, as a renovator of the social edifice, we are beholding. As to James, his letter in the latter pages of the New Testament catalogues him as a fomenter of the people, an economic come-outer: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth." No red-eyed haranguer from a cart tail to-day can go beyond James in his outcry against the oppressive inequalities of human fortune. Traditionally he became known as "the Rampart of the People," and he met his death at the hands of the Jeru-

salemite aristocracy. The relentlessness with which he pillories the "man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel," contrasted with his fellow-feeling for the "poor man in vile raiment," bespeaks some enterings of the iron into his own soul — perhaps back in the Nazareth home during his boyhood, amidst penury of the grinding, the embittering sort.

As to the Baptist, his name calls up a picture of vehemency — a fiery reformer, a staunch protester, the Old Ironsides of the New Testament. He belonged so decidedly to the proletariat that his very clothes and food were remarked — raiment of coarse camel's wool, with a crudely tanned skin about his loins for a girdle, and his food dried locusts ground into a powder and mixed with honey which he gathered from the rocks and trees. Some of the privileged class come to hear him — Pharisees who stood for a criminal quietism, Sadducees who stood openly for acquiescence with the Roman invader, and both lined up against the toiling masses. John to their face called them a "generation of vipers." It seems that John's extremity of utterance and his even, for that day, crude garb and pauper diet, caused criticism. Jesus defended him: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken in the wind, a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." But even he later on sought to check John's turbulent speech, his zeal without knowledge, his sturm-und-drang. That there was an underlying similarity between John and Jesus appears from the fact that Herod Antipas—who, after he had beheaded John, saw Jesus—sincerely believed the latter to be John

risen from the dead. If Jesus was the still small voice of the Restoration Movement, John was its whirlwind. He was "a burning and a shining light."

The question asks itself, How came it that these three sprang from the same family? James might be explained from Jesus, for a lad is peculiarly open to influence from an elder brother. But not so John. John was six months older than Jesus, and was the first to appear in public. Some fourth one must have been the inspiration centre for the three. And signs point to Mary as this fourth one. We have seen the influence wherewith, before his birth, she influenced Jesus. We have seen the hunger-bitten period during which she suckled him, so that the milk he drew in had been distilled from hot rebellious blood within her. It is unthinkable that she ceased this work of education after she had weaned him. The cousin John, of so near the same age as her own first-born, must have been a frequent visitor in that home. For the two families were intimate. The record opens with the story of a visit of one to the other. And the details of that visit breathe a natural and unforced oneness between them, making them seem more like one family than two. Thus John must have come frequently under the influence of Mary, and imbibed her spirit.

Thought of Mary calls up thoughts of that other woman of antiquity, Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi. In the period when liberty in Rome was departing and the nobles were enclosing the public lands away from the common people — much as the lords treated the commons in English towns — Cornelia stood forth and inspired her son Tiberius Gracchus to become a tribune of the people.

He did so. Endowed with her spirit, he demanded a restoration of their lands to the people. In the midst of the agitation he was killed. Nothing daunted, with a Spartan, yes, a Galilean, supremacy of the patriotic over the maternal within her, Cornelia raised up her second son, Caius, to take his elder brother's place. Her letters egging him on to the dangerous venture are still extant, and are a contribution to Latin literature. Caius was also killed, but not until reforms had been effected in Rome's agrarian policy.

Woman was more influential in the life of the ancient world than the history of those times, written by men, has accredited unto her. And Mary, one of the strongest-minded women known to history, played a part in the drama of this world's affairs which refuses to be ignored. Perhaps she kept before herself the image of that other woman — her contemporary — Livia, mistress of the imperial palace on the Tiber. Here also was a wife and mother of force, and of considerable influence in public affairs. But with this the resemblance ceases. Personal ambition spells Livia's character. She divorces her elderly husband, and marries Augustus straightway, she being then within three months of motherhood. Thereupon she dedicates her life to intrigue. She secures the accession of her son Tiberius to the throne by compassing — so rumour affirms — the death of Marcellus, of Caius Cæsar, of Lucius Cæsar, of Agrippa Postumus, and by even hastening the death of Augustus himself. Rumour has probably exaggerated. But, allowing much for shrinkage her character stands portrayed in pigments of a sufficiently sinister hue. Thus confronted each other these

two, Mary and Livia, each of them strong-minded, and each bringing forth fruit after her kind. Livia, mistress of the Palatine, a world at her feet, founds a lineage of decadence. Mary, in a mud-plastered hut hid in the Lebanon range, founds a dynasty of free spirits more enduring than the dynasty of the Cæsars.

Both Jesus and John Baptist show a familiarity with the writings of Isaiah. Mary's own literary style betrays her delvings into the spirit of that fiery Old Testament publicist. We can well believe, therefore, that during many a rainy season when outdoor work would be suspended, Mary gathered the boys around her — was not this method of parental instruction expressly enjoined by Old Testament statute? — and nourished their growing spirits on the intense poet-patriots of Hebrew literature. We find Simon and Jude, younger brothers of Jesus, numbered later in the active revolutionary party. These also must have sat in this family group around Mary's knee, and listened to her readings and expoundings of their nation's ancestral voices. "Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!"

Politically and economically, the times grow steadily worse. Livia in Rome has now accomplished her intrigue — she has put Tiberius on the throne in the room of Augustus. The latter, in the fore part of his reign, had made a pretence of constitutional government. But later, even under him, the tyranny had become naked and unashamed. A small group of people on the banks of the Tiber owned the civilized earth. The world was the property of a close corporation, which Augustus sought to restrict still closer. The Code of Augustus was a code

of class jealousy, designed to promote privilege and exclusiveness. It operated to prevent slaves from becoming freemen, and to crowd freemen down to the level of slaves. Its sole thought was to diminish liberty. In his dying injunction to Tiberius, Augustus counselled him to refuse any more extensions of the Roman citizenship.

Tiberius faithfully followed the counsel. Perhaps we must not credit all that Tacitus says of this emperor, how that Tiberius studied out new forms of vice, so that new words had to be coined to describe his vilenesses. Nevertheless the fact that the appellation, "Enemy of the Human Race," came to attach to him, is eloquent. He sent a new procurator to Palestine — Gratus. Under Gratus things went from bad to worse. At last his fiscal oppressions became unendurable, and the Jews sent a deputation to Rome to get relief. Tiberius's method of reply was to retain the hated official in office. He explained: "Every office induces greed, and if the holder enjoy it only for a short time, without knowing at what moment he may have to surrender it, he will naturally plunder his subjects to the utmost while he can. If on the other hand he hold it for a lengthened term, he will grow weary of oppression and become moderate, as soon as he has extorted for himself what he thinks enough. In one of my campaigns I came upon a wounded soldier lying on the road, with swarms of flies in his bleeding flesh. A comrade pitying him was about to drive them off, thinking him too weak to do it himself. But the wounded man begged him rather to let them alone. 'For,' said he, 'if you drive these flies away you will do me harm

instead of good. These are already full, and do not bite me as they did. But if you frighten them off, hungry ones will come in their stead, and suck the last drop of blood from me.'" So the procurator was retained to plunder Palestine for nine years longer, and then was succeeded by that arch extortioner, Pontius Pilate.

A picture of the economic unsettlement of the times is found in the parables of Jesus. A man starts to build a house, and has to leave it unfinished for lack of funds. Commerce is at a standstill, and people with treasure hoard it in hidden places. Law is in abeyance, and a judge makes a personal matter of his administration of justice, taking up the case of a widow merely to further his own convenience. The principle of absenteeism has been accepted in government, with the personal ownership of the governed by the governor; so that we hear of "a certain nobleman" who "went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom." The constitutionalized thievery at the top of society is eating like a pervasive gangrene down through the social mass, begetting a similar state at the bottom; so that we find along the Jericho-Jerusalem road organized bands of brigands. Men bury their money in the ground for safe-keeping; where treasure is laid up, there "thieves break through and steal." One of the pictures is of a strong man armed and keeping guard over his goods from the despoiler. We see a speculator withholding his corn from the people, building his barn bigger; whereupon the people rise up against him, resorting to mob law in their desperation: "Thou fool, this night they are requiring thy soul of thee." Because of the exhaustion of resources due to the fiscal

oppression, people everywhere are being forced into debt, and we see debtors kneeling before their creditors for mercy; failing to find which, they are thrown into prison. Farmers, stripped of their best fields, are forced to plant seed in hard and stony ground unfit for agriculture. So extreme is the destitution, that an empty cupboard is referred to not as an exceptional case but as the chronic and well-understood state: "Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." Brutality is the treatment meted out to slaves; from behind the doors of the slave dungeons we hear the victims being beaten with many stripes — wailing and gnashing of teeth. Amidst the desperate poverty, the loss of a coin is serious, so that the house is swept; and its recovery is celebrated by the neighbours. Justice is bought and sold—in Seneca's language, "judgments knocked down to the highest bidder"—so that a co-legatee is helpless when his brother, the stronger, refuses to divide the inheritance with him. Whilst, underneath all else, an accompaniment in the bass of deep, pedal notes, we hear the rumblings of a storm that is gathering; and there are vivid flashes of fire through the night.

The expectation of a speedy change in the social order is so fundamental in the mind of Jesus, that he takes it for granted. He nowhere argues it. He assumes it as something universally accepted by his hearers. He makes it the base-work of all his teaching. The economic impoverishment and the humiliations to the spirit of man, have reached a pass where they can no longer be suffered. For, under the now prevailing conditions, the only life

that can be lived is a life that is not worth living. The people, frenzied by the slavery which they behold creeping toward them, throng in revolt to the standards of Judas of Galilee. But Rome is erudite in the science of crushing; and the only result is a few more desperadoes added to the brigandage that is already the terror of Galilee. Manifestly something is going to be done. The people which sit in darkness are looking for light. Their question is, From which quarter of the heaven will it break, and what will the light be?

At this juncture the news comes that a leader has appeared, by the name of John, and that over in the Jordan Valley he is raising up a following. The people flock thitherward. No small commotion is being aroused. Jesus hears the news. He is joyously stirred. He makes a journey over to John's headquarters. It appears that he is prepared to enlist under John's leadership and become his lieutenant. He even takes the first step to such an enlistment — receives the rite which John enforces on candidates. If the Baptist has the word that can lighten the darkness which is settling upon the land, Jesus is prepared to throw himself into the movement — will follow him to the end.

But it appears after a while that the Baptist has not this word. John has no constructive programme. His rôle is that of a denouncer. He beholds the out-of-jointness of the times, but can see no clear way of reducing the dislocation. He is like a physician who is strong in diagnosis but weak in therapeutics. This absence of an affirmative note is felt by his auditors. After being stirred by his powerful denunciations, they ask, "But

what shall we do?" He makes no clear reply. John is like a rapt sermon that leaves out the application. His preaching ends up in the air. So long as John is denunciatory, he soars and is a very buzzard for majesty of flight. But when, in response to the repeated summons of the listeners, he comes down to earth and attempts a practical programme, he is like that same buzzard when it is on the ground — wobbly to the point of the comic. John's plan for social reconstruction is an extension of alms giving, and for the soldiery to cease extorting on their own private account, content with their wages. Confronted with "The System" in the person of Herod, John limits his indictment to the incest that is in the Herodian palace, as though the times would be all right again if Herod would but become decent in his marital relations.

But we must not bear too hard on John. With all of his shortcomings he had a virtue which in large measure atoned for them — a clear recognition of those shortcomings. He was not a constructive thinker — and he said so. He described himself as merely a Voice:

> An infant, crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light;
> And with no language but a cry.

John's work was to call aloud against the crooked paths in the prevailing landscape of society, and then usher in another, greater than he, who would make those paths straight: his to exclaim against the precipitous inequalities of human fortune, and then trust to his successor to fill those valleys and to bring low those dizzy mountain

peaks of a too great prosperity. John could do little more with the poison tree than to prune away a few of its branches. But there would come one after him who would lay the axe to the root.

John seems to have suggested to Jesus that he himself was to be this greater and mightier one. Charming is the picture these cousins present, each effacing himself for the other, each in honour preferring the other. Their followers tried to bring about a rivalry between them. In vain. In fact, the bearing of the two cousins toward each other is so harmonious throughout, that it suggests some covenant to a common Cause, wherewith they had covenanted themselves back in boyhood; so that now each cared not for himself but only that the Cause be advanced. There is even a hint in the nativity narratives that their two mothers had vowed them each to the other before birth, and now they did not depart therefrom.

So long as John was succeeding, Jesus refused to put his own personality forward. It was only after John was imprisoned that he stepped forth into a public and authoritative position. There is a whisper in the records that it was his indignation at this imprisonment of his cousin which brought Jesus to the deciding point — the straw that broke at last the back of his too patient endurance. For it revealed to him the uselessness any longer of palliative measures: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Get a new mind; for the Restoration is at hand." In the career of The Carpenter from that moment we see force of character aroused by the sense of a great wrong.

CHAPTER V

HIS PLAN

Jesus had a plan. There is a decisiveness in his proclamations and a sure-footedness in his goings, which bespeak a goal clearly in view. What was this goal? and how did he propose practically to attain it?

As has already been hinted, Jesus was conversant with the world politics of his time. For this Workingman of Nazareth had an intellect of the first magnitude — a point in him that has not received the attention it deserves. To turn the stream of history from its wonted channel and give it a new direction argues a great heart, but it argues even more a great mind. Ecstatics, such as Francis of Assissi, create a stir; but the world, with a passing attention to the rhapsodizer, continues to jog along pretty much the same. When however an epoch is made, so much so that the world redates its calendar, we are certified that a thinker has appeared. Jesus had one of the master intellects of all time. In its sweep, its incisiveness, its granitic texture and firmness, and in its masculine power to impregnate other minds, it yields to the intellect of no Aristotle or Bacon or Newton. Above every other trait in him, the Carpenter of Galilee was a thinker. To know one's own time is the surest mark of mentality. This mark was his — he applied his master intellect to the world politics of his day.

In fact the march of world events occupies so fundamental a position in his teaching, that his mission can almost be summed up in the phrase he himself used — to awaken the people to "the signs of the times." Jesus was a publicist. He had in highest degree the journalist temperament. No other person of that day, not the emperor himself on his uplifted throne by the Tiber, read the times so discerningly nor traced the trend of events with so statesmanly an eye.

For such a reading of the world, Palestine was a more favourable location than Italy. It was more at the centre. In the clash between Europe and Asia which was impending, this hill country of Judah occupied a midmost position. The great eras in human history have lain at the collision point of ideas. The Norman Conquest is an instance; also the Renaissance, when the Crusaders had brought Europe and Asia into contact. Ever the conflict between the East and the West has been the most prolific source of humanity's awakenment, and therefore of humanity's advancement. Such a conflict was about to take place now, with Palestine the meeting point of the racial currents. This was not the first time she had played the part of a buffer state. In earlier days the history of the world had centred around the clash between Egypt and Mesopotamia. To the Old Testament prophets have been ascribed supernatural powers of insight, because they discerned so clearly the outlines of this clash. But their geographical position was in large part the secret. Palestine, set square between these rival powers, and yet aloof from them because of its mountain fastness—hedged in by sea on one side and

desert on the other — was a natural observatory. This had been more of a help to those Old Testament journalists than they themselves probably realized.

Now Egypt was replaced by Rome. And instead of the eastern empires of Nineveh and Babylon, were the hosts of Persia — Parthian warriors — waiting to dispute Rome's claim; with India and the Far East dim in the mists of vast distances, but now bearing into view since the campaigns of Alexander. Mark Antony had sensed this awakening of the East, due to the aggressions of the invasive Roman, and had displayed a real quality of statesmanship in his move to build up from Alexandria as a centre an empire of the East which should rival that of Rome. The importance at this time of the East, as compared with the raw and undeveloped West, appears in the persistent rumours, toward the end of his career, that Julius Cæsar was planning to move the capital of the empire to Ilion, Alexandria, or some eastern centre — rumours which eventually found their fulfilment when the capital was transferred to Constantinople. Had Antony been master of himself, as was Augustus, to give to preparations for war the priceless hours which he spent in dalliance with Cleopatra, the outcome of his fight with Italy might have been different, and a new direction imparted to history.

The clash was to be one between materialism and idealism. From Palestine, to the westward stretched a civilization of roofs; to the eastward, a civilization of tents. The Asiatic mind, bred to the eternal mystery of the desert and evaluating exterior things as but instrumental and tributary to man, has developed soul

as its chief product. All of the religions have had their origin in Asia. But to the Western world — and Rome was its representative — things were more important than men. Steadily these two opposite civilizations had expanded; now they touched. The combat was on.

Jesus foresaw the clash. At that moment Pale tine was the focus of the world: and Galilee was the focus of Palestine. Removed from the race exclusiveness of the Jerusalem district, Galilee was cosmopolitan. Friendly intercourse with travellers from many nations had given to the minds of its people a wide horizon. Almost any child in Galilee knew the flow of the world tides, better than a sage in the cloistered Jerusalemite set. From the hill above Nazareth the beholder looked down upon the waters of the Mediterranean, where passed the ships of every nation — corn fleets from Egypt, slavers, the galleys of Antony and Cleopatra, ships of war with their three banks of oars, merchant vessels from a hundred ports. To the eastward from the same hilltop, one sees the Jordan and the district beyond, where Asia's sandy reaches set in. From those same heights Jesus saw to the north the ribbon-like road where ladened camels plodded between Damascus and the coast, trafficking in the spices of Ceylon, the silks of China. And to the south he looked down upon the legions at march along the Roman road from Acre to the Jordan, by the Esdraelon route. Dense indeed would have been the mind that knew not what the presence of those legions meant, and their grim garrisons defacing the landscape. From the Nazareth heights he could almost make out Cæsarea on the coast, where Herod with lavish expenditure had

built a bulkhead into the Mediterranean, to serve as Rome's maritime base for a grim invasion of Asia. (The Parthians, secure in their Persian fastnesses, had thrice defeated the Romans — humiliations which, unavenged, would tremble Italy's world empire. For the Parthians would be a nucleus around which the awakening East would rally. And Rome would lose her richest hunting ground.)

Two civilizations were colliding. As Rome represented the western element, the religion of Israel represented the eastern — the supremacy of Things, as against the supremacy of Man. Whenever a nation of imperialistic bent comes into contact with some people of a strongly national sentiment, an explosive situation is created. Switzerland, Ireland, the Transvaal, are in proof. Now two continents were in head-on collision. Two opposing lines of historic development, the one culminating in Israel, the other culminating in Rome, were meeting face to face. The issue was joined. There was no longer room in the world for both. Conflict was irrepressible. The greatest imperialistic force the world has seen was square up against the most intense nationality ever known. It was the dramatic moment in history.

The record states that the ferment produced in Jesus by the swirl of these tides, so pregnant of fateful issues, took him for a time well nigh out of himself. The intensity of this particular experience suggests throughout his entire youth a wild warfare of conflicting elements within him, before he had become a coherent being; and now it had reached its crest. So energetic was the

agitation that it drove him into a wilderness retreat. Apparently this was some mountain height from around which fell wide horizons. For the narrative states — with pardonable exaggeration — that from this observatory he beheld "all the kingdoms of the earth." So wrapped was he in contemplation of the vision, the destinies which were unrolling before him, that he well-nigh forgot food, the necessary care of the body. Through forty intense days he revolves the thing. Slowly out of the mist and welter the clear-cut issue disengages itself. Finally it takes shape. He sees whitherward the currents are setting — beneath all the tangle of events, elemental forces are ranging themselves for conflict. When he comes out of that mountain sojourn at last, he has the world crisis well in hand, and what he will do to meet that crisis.

Rome is forging a world-wide empire of property, with man crushed by its weight of oppression. He will forge a world-wide empire of man, in league against that oppressor. He will show that Rome's idea of world confederation is a sword that cuts both ways. To Rome's solidarity of vested rights, he will oppose the solidarity of human rights. Rome is preaching the folly of national jealousies when Property is at stake. He will preach the folly of national jealousies when Man is at stake.

Jesus planned to make the Jews the nucleus of a federation of the world's proletariat against the world's oppressor. He saw that the moment was opportune. The people were astir. Probably there has been no moment in history when democracy was more rampant, than at this instant when Rome was seeking

to fasten upon the world her empire of infinite repression — "fields white unto the harvest," as he expressed it. The barometer plainly indicated that Palestine would be the storm centre. Jesus planned to set his cause so fully at this explosive core, that when the crash came it would hurl his word to Farthest East and Farthest West, and range the common people in a united front against the united aggressor. At the focus of the world he would set democracy as the light of the world. As he phrased it in his opening w rds, wherein he unfolded to his nation the strategic position it occupied at the vortex of the world currents: "A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

However it was not her geographical position alone that put Israel in the forefront of this fight against Rome the Devourer. From time immemorial Judah had stood for the rights of the common people. Renan terms Israel's career: "The most exalted democratic movement of which humanity has preserved the remembrance. The history of Israel is of all histories that in which the popular spirit has most constantly ruled." The Hebrews dated their commencement as a nation from a working-class revolt. King Rameses II, the greatest builder in all the Egyptian dynasty, had impressed into slavery the Semitic settlers on the Isthmus of Suez, compelling them to drag the great stones for his buildings, and to put Nile mud and chopped straw together to form bricks. But the bedouin lust of liberty was in their

veins. Their haughty nomad spirit ill-brooked the thought of serfdom. And under one Moses as their leader, who had previously established relations with kin bedouin of the Arabah desert, they effected their escape. Henceforth they worshipped the Lord of freedom, the Unseen One who with strong arm and outstretched hand had delivered them from the house of bondage. "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," was now all their religion and all their theology. To this day the passover is one of the great festivals of their faith — the yearly commemoration of their independence from slavery in the brickyards of Goshen.

Throughout Israel's life thereafter, the rights of the poor, the toilers, were deemed the special object of divine protection. The artificer is highly mentioned in the Old Testament. The God of Israel is a workingman's God — he is ever on the side of the poor against those who would despoil them. So conspicuously was this in their thought that it wove itself into the very structure of their language: in Hebrew the word for "poor" means also "the gentle," "the humble," "the pious." And the word for "rich " means also "the violent," "the wicked," "the impious." The Psalms vibrate with this passion for the proletariat: "The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor; let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

"Hide me under the shadow of thy wings from the wicked that oppress me; they are enclosed in their own fat." "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him." This explains why the Psalms are so poignantly intimate even to this day — the secret of the perennial freshness of this Old Testament book of songs. The Psalms may not improperly be termed the Hymn Book of Democracy.

This consecration of the poor had its inevitable effect in their economic and political exaltation. In Israel alone among the nations of antiquity there was no peasant order. Naught could wash out of her blood the notion of equality. In Rome the distinctive badge of the patrician as opposed to the plebeian was that only the former could trace his ancestry. But in Israel no member of the nation was so poor as not to have a genealogy. The lowly were "God's poor." There were slave raids all around her, but among the Hebrews man-stealing was a capital offence. In their abhorrence of the Fugitive Slave Law, the Abolitionists could not have gone beyond the old Israelites: "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him." Laws were passed to prevent excessive inequalities of fortune. Debt was not permitted to enslave permanently. Rigid limitations were fixed to the private ownership of wealth — there were to be

redistributions of the land at stated intervals: "The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine." Each day the hireling must receive his wage before the setting of the sun. "He that taketh away the bread gotten by sweat, is like to him that killeth his neighbour." Says Laveleye, member of the Royal Academy of Belgium: "In all epochs and in every land, after primitive equality had disappeared, aspirations for social equality are to be met with. But it was from Judea that there arose the most persistent protests against inequality and the most ardent aspirations after justice that have ever raised humanity out of the actual into the ideal. We feel the effect still. It is thence has come that leaven of revolution which still moves the world. Wherever the people have taken up the Bible and allowed their minds to be thoroughly imbued with its teaching, they have come forth strong with the spirit of reform."

In Israel the common people were regarded as citizens of God — Vox populi, vox Dei. The people were regarded as the source of government, so that the leaders in Israel ruled only by the force of public opinion. When a king was appointed, it was because the people had asked for him. Nor was the step taken without some qualms: "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." The revolt of the Ten Tribes not long after makes clear that the people had no notion, when establishing a monarchy, of surrendering their own prerogative as the origin and fount of civil authority. Even when oppression supplanted democracy, we find a proletariat, alert and articulate — the "multitude," that restless, ceaseless, ominous background to scripture history.

When Herod wished to put John Baptist to death he hesitated for that he "feared the multitude because they counted him a prophet." And we find the rulers contracting with Judas to betray Jesus unto them, "in the absence of the multitude."

The prophets were the spokesmen of this wide-awake proletariat. They came out of the people and spoke for the people. Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah, were in Israel what the tribunes were in Rome. Nehemiah wished to check the avarice of the nobles and princes; and this is how he did it: "I set a great assembly against them." Israel's political system may almost be said to have been Government by Mass-meetings. The prophets agitated against the rapid and dangerous concentration of wealth in Jerusalem. Through seven centuries they stormed and pleaded for a return to the old patriarchal simplicity and solidarity.

Wherefore, the incurable hopefulness of the Jewish religion. Other nations located their Golden Age in the past; they built their poetry out of retrospection — a backward-glancing muse. But the Jews have always located their Golden Age ahead of them — an invincible zest of the future. Which fact finds here its explanation. The sovereignty of the people is a goal of such dizzy altitude that no attainment of it can be perfectly satisfying. It is a winged ideal. It keeps ever in front.

These facts are of high importance in recovering a portrait of The Carpenter. For Jesus was a Jew. The record opens by tracing his genealogy on both sides back through an unending line of Jewish ancestry. He

was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Circumcised the eighth day according to the faith of his fathers, he was loyal to that faith throughout. He "accomplished all things that were according the law of the Lord." When he rebelled against some contemporary rite, it was in order to return to an older and more spiritual law of which the contemporary rite was a caricature. Even in his seemingly most radical innovation — his widening o the Jewish mental horizon to take in the disinherited among the other nations — he was but harking back to Isaiah-of-the-Exile. He based his propaganda on Israel's national traditions: "Deliverance is of the Jews." When commissioning his disciples to a world-wide mission, he expressly enjoined them to retain, for a start at least, their Jewish continuity: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His antagonism against the Jerusalemite set was that of pious Jews everywhere; for that clique of clever priests and nobles in the capital had traitorously compounded with Rome. Jesus made so much of his Jewish inheritance that, when he came to organize the propaganda of his new social order, he poured it into the mould of the Jewish state with its twelvefold division. And he must have stressed this detail with some emphasis, because the first thing the disciples did after his taking away, was to fill up the number twelve by electing a man to the place left vacant by the death of Judas.

The Jew in every age has been tenacious of liberty. In America to this day no political boss has been able to corral the Jewish vote. Unlike other races, their voting strength has no solidarity — it refuses to be

counted beforehand. Incubating there through forty heroic centuries, independency is in their blood. A Jew is congenitally unfit for a servile lot — as the capitalist class of old discovered. In the slave markets at Rome a Jew always brought a low price — to keep him in slavery was a harassing task to his owners; load him with irons, his spirit held out, unsurrendered. Even the haughty Tacitus was moved to compliment the Jews in that they refused to flatter emperors or to erect statues to earthly marauders. "We be Abraham's seed, and were never slaves to any man." In carrying them away into Babylon, their captors soon discovered that they had "caught a Turk"; so that it was not long before plans were being discussed for sending them back to their homes: "Thus, saith Cyrus, King of Persia: Who is there among you of all His people? his god be with him, and let him go." It was found that the Jews were "too savage to be slaves." When Titus destroyed Jerusalem, he sent many of his captives into the mines of Egypt — he durst not bring too many of them into Italy. And this class of slaves was particularly sought out for immolation in Rome's bloody spectacles, the conqueror being exalted "for making the general annihilation of the foe a public amusement."

Travellers in Palestine wonder how so much could have happened in so small a space. The explanation is found. In her stand for democracy, it was Israel against the world. The heroism of that struggle begat a nobility of spirit and a tenacity

of faith which together spell personality: and personality spells achievement. It was Israel's passion for political and economic freedom that intensified the other elements in her faith. The war she declared on Rome just a few years from this time was, as historians truly state, little else than national suicide. Nevertheless it was a something of nobleness in her to meet a resounding fate, and not to end sordidly as did the kingdom of Pergamum to the north of her, by a signature affixed to a protocol. Israel stood for the value of man, against the overweening arrogance of property. It was not an accident that the most aggressive democrat in history was born in Galilee, of a race the most tenaciously democratical in human annals.

This is why Israel attached so much of spiritual meaning to her existence as a nation. Great empires, founded on the exploitation of the masses, were around her on every side. Habakkuk wrote of the Babylonians: "Their horses also are swifter than the leopards and are more fierce than the evening wolves. And their horsemen shall spread themselves. And they shall gather slaves as the sand." "Slaves as the sand!" In Old Testament writings the economic is constantly to the fore. Its heaven is this world in excelsis. No matter to what altitudes his prayers and his songs winged themselves, the feet of the old Israelite remained on solid earth. And with cause. Economic degradation has never yet produced high spirituality. Therefore her God was an interested partner with the people in their fight for

freedom. Israel believed that Jehovah could not be adequately worshipped by a nation of slaves:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down:
Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.
We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song,
And they that wasted us required of us mirth,
Saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

We can understand the imprecation with which this poet-democrat closes his lament: "O daughter of Babylon, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us, and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." The Assyrian Assurburnipal, with charming naïveté, supplies the secret. He describes the fall of a city: "I took away their children like troops of lambs"; and at the fall of Sour: "I buried some alive, and others were crucified and impaled. I caused many to be flayed before my own eyes, and I covered the walls with their skins." At Tiela: "I carried off the prisoners, the booty, oxen, sheep. I burned great quantities of spoil. With my own hands I captured many prisoners alive. I cut off the hands and feet of some, the nose and ears of others, and tore their eyes out."

When this foreign domination overtook Israel, therefore, she refused to be comforted. To her bedouin blood with its aboriginal thirst for liberty had now been added the still mightier sanctions of religion, so that her continuance in a servile state was regarded as disrespect to Jehovah. Her plannings by day and her prayers in the night were for Israel's deliverance. Thus arose

the messianic ideal — a Deliverer who would redeem the people from this new slavery, as Moses had delivered them in the days of old. As tyranny succeeded tyranny, this hope became their religion. The new state which would be formed when the Deliverer had accomplished his work was looked forward to as the "Kingdom of God." It would be characterized by a reign of universal justice. Man's inhumanity to man would be done away. The disinherited classes would be restored to their own. In this reign of economic peace and fruitfulness — an Edenized earth — even the desert would share; it would rejoice and blossom as the rose.

At the time of Jesus this ancestral hope, because of the despotism which was riveting itself upon the people, was flaming as never before. He took this hope, and utilized it for his purpose. No one more than The Carpenter has appreciated the importance of historic continuity. The more radical his plan, the more he coveted for it the sanction of antiquity. He knew that any cause that is to project itself into the future needs the momentum of the past. He emphasized at the start, therefore, that he was no innovator, but a real conservator: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am come to fulfil." And this age-old doctrine of "The Kingdom" was the tool whereby he would destroy the Empire of Exploitation and reconstruct society into free and joyous industry. However, he made alterations in this tool as it came to his hand. And these alterations are important. New wine needed new wine-skins.

In the first place, he gave to this term "Kingdom"

an interior reach and direction. Until then it had possessed only a political application. This he retained; but he built for it also a causeway into the heart. The modern reader can perhaps grasp the "Kingdom of Heaven" as Jesus used it — so far as a single phrase can embody it — by substituting for it in every case another term, "The kingdom of self-respect": "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the self-respect to Israel?" Self-respect has in it, beneath all its gentleness and forbearance, a granitic quality. It is the skeleton framework necessary to every upstanding type of man, and without which his softer and flesh-like virtues would slop down into wobbling jelly. To The Carpenter's way of thinking, spirituality is a virile thing, one that makes greatly for an affirmative life. It is the foe of slavishness and passivity. In his thought, therefore, religion is self-respect lifted into a universal law. That means, for one thing, moral character; because a man who respects his own personality and likewise the personality of every other man has attained to the ethical life. Its trait of universality, also, touches with emotion what otherwise would be a wingless morality, and thus gives it lifting power. To Jesus, slavishness was moral suicide. He claimed for every man the means to lead a dignified life. Said Homer: "Zeus takes away half the manhood of a man when slavery overtakes him." No self-control without self-reverence.

Though small in itself, self-respect has resident within it a principle of growth; it is the root of all other virtues. "The kingdom of self-respect is like to a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. Which

indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among the herbs and becometh a tree." "He began to preach and to say, The kingdom of self-respect is at hand." Self-respect is the cardinal virtue, both for a man and for a people, so that to obtain it no sacrifice is too costly: "The kingdom of self-respect is like treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found he goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." It is "the pearl of great price," so that the merchantman "went and sold all that he had, and bought it." This kingdom, contrary to the then prevailing ideas of it, "cometh not by observation" — that is, by chariots of fire, and rainbow rafters across the sky: "neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of self-respect is within you." By interpreting Israel's ancient hope thus, that hope was phrased in scopeful fashion, conserving all that was worth while in its ancient form, and elastic enough to receive increments of meaning through all time to come; herein it was like a householder, who brought forth out of his treasure "things both new and old."

Beginning with the individual, the doctrine of self-respect has an outreach to society as a whole. "The kingdom of self-respect is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." That meaty word "judgment," which frames itself so fondly on the lips of Jesus, has a similar connotation. Self-respect is the personal quality, of which judgment is the social expression. An individual fibred by self-respect will give unto another the full measure of what is due, as well as demand from that

other the full measure. And that is "judgment." "Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters, judgment, mercy, and faith." "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of self-respect."

In this proclamation of self-respect lay the dynamite of The Carpenter's teaching. Given a world in which half of the people — of the same colour as their masters — were kept in slavery by intimidation; let loose among them this one word "self-respect — social earthquakes set in forthwith. It was this word which gave that torpedo effect to the quietest talk by The Carpenter, and made on his lips the most innocent metaphor into forked lightning.

Beside interiorizing it, there was a second alteration which Jesus made in the "Kingdom" idea as it came to his hand — he internationalized it. Until then this instrument of social reconstruction had been narrowly Jewish — that the new state of society was to be for Israel alone. True, there had been a beginning of a broader idea in the Isaiah-of-the-Exile, Israel there being portrayed as the Servant to go forth to the gentiles. But this newer doctrine was but literary; it had found no lodgement in life and practice. The Carpenter took up from Isaiah this scopeful rendering and gave it reality. His training in "Galilee-of-the-gentiles" had loosened from about his neck the collar of Judaistic self-sufficiency. As he looked forth from Palestine's observation tower upon the nations of the world he beheld a similar scene in each. The working class in them all were in one and the same slavery, their common master being a closely

cemented capitalistic group with headquarters on the Tiber. He perceived that Israel's hope of deliverance lay in making common cause with the proletariat of these other nations. It had been her vice in the past that she had cultivated so haughty an aloofness — a national pride utterly disproportionate to her power. And dearly had she repaid it. She had thought only of her own freedom. She forgot that despotism is an encroaching invasive force, so that democracy out of self-preservation must display an equal energy of encroachment and invasiveness. Had Israel been statesmanly she would have perceived that slaves in Babylon meant, in the sure course of the centuries, enslavement for Israel also; and she would not have sought freedom for herself, oblivious to the human beings groaning in bondage in the nations round about. Rather she would have put herself at the head of a universal emancipation, and thus, in that world-wide freedom, have preserved her own. On Abraham Lincoln's reëlection to the presidency, the International Workingmen's Association sent to him from London a message of congratulation: "From the commencement of the titanic American strife the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the Star-Spangled Banner carried the destiny of their class. For the men of labour, with their hopes of the future, even their past conquests, were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic." "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers?" her own self-centredness, when she failed to perceive that her cause was one with the toiler class of all nations.

Jesus saw that this mistake must not be repeated.

Israel, confronting the Roman devourer single-handed, would be most unequally matched: "What king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" It were suicidal. Israel need not take up the gage alone. Wherever Rome's empire was extending, a ground-swell of discontent was setting in, a tidal heave of the industrial mass. For this was back in the formation days of that empire, before it had saddled itself firmly on the backs of the people, and while hope was yet alive. The hour was striking. A hundred peoples were ready: "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest. Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." In fact, the danger was lest the restiveness of the peoples had reached a point where it could no longer be restrained and would burst forth untimely, before a unified plan had been formed and before a religious principle had been grafted onto the revolt in order to sustain it against shocks and to guide it into constructive channels. Jesus clearly perceived this danger: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" That this fear was not groundless is attested by the premature insurrections which blazed forth in this century of revolution — that of the Germans under Arminius; the Britons under Boadicea; the Rhine peoples under Civilis; and the pathetic, the folly-fraught, and yet noble revolt of the Jews — that revolt which is sepulchred to this day at the Arch of Titus in Rome. The oppressors were united, but the peoples were not

united. Revolting singly, the empire met each of them with its confederated strength, and was easily the master.

This then was The Carpenter's plan: First, he would teach his fellow countrymen that national self-respect comes only when this trait has been incarnated in each individual. This lesson learned by Israel — for how otherwise could the blind lead the blind; would they not both fall into the ditch? — he would thereupon make her his servant, his elect to carry the tidings. "From Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem." He would put his spirit upon her, and she should go forth and proclaim self-respect to the gentiles. The Jews being an exceedingly prolific race, were already emigrating to the nations round about, in a wide dispersion — a diaspora for purposes of trade. He would take advantage of this fact, and transform it into a diaspora of democracy. These emissaries would do a revolutionary work without seeming to do it — naught but to drop innocent-looking seed into the soil, and pass on. But that seed of self-respect taketh root of itself, and springeth forth, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; and the crop which would mature therefrom would be of exceeding interest to the banded exploiters on the Tiber. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all nations—then shall the end come."

No fact is more certain than that this Carpenter from Nazareth had a world consciousness. His was the one intellect of that day which thought habitually in world terms: Expressions such as, "the field is the world";

"wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world"; fall unforced from his lips. "Go ye into all the world," was his mandate; "and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of self-respect is at hand." An intellect framed thus on a world's diameter proves the quality of mind which he was endowed withal. But events were also helping him to this statesmanly programme. A common oppressor was making possible, for the first time in history, a union of the world in a common cause against that oppressor. Jesus had an eye for strategy. He knew that there is nothing like a common struggle to beget the idea of common interest. The harder the wrestle against the devourer, the closelier would the wrestlers themselves be welded. The Carpenter summoned his followers to a day of wrath. Imperative for character is the ingredient of a healthy indignation. Attraction and repulsion are the twin passions which make human nature's warp and woof — yes, a cosmic law, for push and pull make the world go round.

The proletariat of a hundred nations — leaderless, polyglot, multitudinous — had fainted and were scattered abroad: "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." Into this living débris Jesus planned to inject the cohesion of a common indignation, and a common loyalty to himself as the fomenter and guide of that indignation. A federation of the world against the federated oppressors of the world — this was the plan of The Carpenter.

CHAPTER VI

PROPAGANDA

It was a large undertaking, this to which Jesus had set his hand. And he needed for it large supplies. To call to self-respect a world of slaves, to renew within them a taste for freedom, and to base that freedom now on foundations that would last, was an elemental task and needed an implement equally elemental. The Carpenter, setting out to move a world, needed a lever as large as the world. This lever he found in religion.

The history of the planet attests that there is nothing which so awakens self-respect in a slave and plants within him a distaste for slavish things as the doctrine that God and he are relatives. Intimacy with the divine makes always and everywhere for democracy. Let the priest-built wall of partition between a peasant and his Maker be broken down, the peasant ceases straightway to be a peasant. For in that moment his spirit achieves emancipation: and once he is a freeman in spirit, he will very soon be a freeman in his social estate also. The man who knows God otherwise than by hearsay will go on to the next step and declare it unseemly for such a person to be in a servile relation to anybody.

Jesus had here an illustrious precedent. Moses, in seeking to loose the yoke of Egypt from the Goshen brick-

makers, had first to counteract the numbing effect upon them of four hundred years of slavery. Mere arguments of economic well-being would have been wasted on those dehumanized toilers. A materialized self-interest, a cool calculating of more and less, could have awakened no lust of freedom in a people sunk in a four-centuried sleep of slavishness. Moses took another route. It was because he was a religious genius that he was so successful as an awakener of a sodden and dead proletariat. Vigils in the wilderness had unlocked for him the gateway into man's interior life, where alone are the hidings of power; so that he came back to Israel's slave horde, armed with a mandate from the Highest. He began his work among them with this proclamation: "The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." Honoured by a visit from such a Guest, the lowest-browed slave in his sty perceived his home to be a sty, and sought straightway a better habitation. The exodus was the result. The doctrine of Israel as God's "chosen people" had its origin thus in a revolutionary motive. It took a horde of slaves and made them over into a democratism uncompromisable, and which has endured from that day to this. Speaks Renan: "The code of Jahvé was one of the earliest and boldest attempts ever made in defence of the weak and helpless." It is significant in this connection that the followers of Jesus saw a parallel between his work and that of Moses. Said Stephen of him: "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord raise

up unto you of your brethren, like unto me." Jesus himself hammered home the parallel: "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me."

Judas of Gamala knew also the leverage which religion gives to any movement for popular awakenment. When he made the sedition which was eventually — A.D. 70 — to set Palestine ablaze, he did so by proclaiming to the common people their nearness to God. Josephus describes him and his followers as imbued "with an invincible love of liberty, maintaining that God is their only Governor and Lord;" so that we are not surprised to find them fanatical democrats, "despising every form of death nor allowing the fear of it to make them call any man Lord."

Jesus utilized to the full this inspirational fount of insurgency. He developed it beyond what any other awakener of the masses had done. So much so, in fact, that many reading his words have confused the end for the means, and have regarded religion as the cardinal interest of The Carpenter, to which all else was contributory — a view supported neither by proof-texts nor by the general type of man portrayed in the first three gospels. (The Fourth Gospel is admitted to-day to be a later document, and to have been — as itself confesses — prompted by a controversial motive. It is unauthoritative as a contemporary record, except where it confirms the type of personality portrayed in the three earlier documents.)

The modern notion of worship for the sake of worship was alien to The Carpenter's type of mind. That was the essence of the Pharisee position, with which Jesus

was in bitter controversy throughout. Unless a life culminates in action, it was to him like a house builded on sands, a shifty and inconstant thing. The fact that his younger brother James stresses the same truth is important as suggesting the intensely practical atmosphere which characterized working-class Galilee and its Nazareth home. Religion for its own sake is the result of bookishness; we shall come across it, but in the academic rabbi circles of Jerusalem. The Carpenter, trained by a lifetime of practical pursuits and with a thousand generations of Old Testament materiality in his blood, held tenaciously to this world and its tasks. He built up no mass of visions remote from the earth. Spirituality to him was the solid materialism of life, shot through with purpose and so made incandescent and luminous. He regarded religion as the inspiration of the world's work, and not as an end in itself.

We are prepared, therefore, to see that The Carpenter's theological equipment was of the slenderest. The fact of God, a fact woven into the warp and woof of his people's thought, he accepted without any attempt at definition. The nearest he ever came to a description of God was in his picture of heaven in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. And there the father of heaven is represented as Abraham the patriarch. Jesus's prime concern was to arouse the common people to a sense of dignity and rulership. Therefore the passages of infinite tenderness wherewith he pictured the love of heaven toward them: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your father. But the very hairs on your head are all numbered.

Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows!" Such language addressed to the populace of the ancient world was in the highest degree inflammatory. It aroused self-respect: and self-respect was fatal to the industrial order that Rome was trying to impose. Rome was incontinently drumming into the proletariat that they were naught but "articulate agricultural implements." Hence her rage at Jesus and his followers, as soon as she found them out. For here was a teacher going about the country and impressing the common people with a sense of their infinite worth, lifting them from the level of oxen, "implements," clear up to a kinship with the divine. Small wonder that Rome's historian, Tacitus, applied to the movement the term "dangerous." Said he: "The originator of the name, a person called Christus, had been executed by Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius, and the dangerous superstition, though put down for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the original home of the pest, but even in Rome."

This thought, that the primary purpose of the Carpenter of Nazareth was economic and only secondarily religious, will come so upheavingly to many, that it is needful to buttress it. And here we summon to the stand no less expert a witness than Arthur McGiffert, professor in Union Theological Seminary, New York. He avers: "It is often said that Jesus came to make men more religious. In one sense one might almost say that he came to make them less religious; for he laboured to free them from what was ordinarily called religion in his day — a fear of God which made necessary religious exercises of one kind or another in order to appease his

wrath, and so distracted men from the real duties of life; or a delight in God which took the form of spiritual worship and contemplation, and made all else seem barren and empty. Jesus was a foe of religion in so far as it interfered with active service, just as much as he was a foe of selfishness and greed." And again he presses it home: "Social salvation is the watchword of christianity." Jesus was the most modern man of his time.

If the proclamation of the common man's immediate relation to God powerfully tends to political rights and economic justice, the Pharisees were "safe" teachers for Rome to have loose in Palestine. For the Pharisee party was based on the essential degradation and bestiality of the masses. Their name meant, "That which draws itself apart." In the street they pulled aside their skirts so as not to touch "the accursed multitude that knoweth not the law." They straitly regulated their intercourse with those "dregs of society." Marriages between the two classes were looked upon by them as misalliances, and compared to throwing one's daughter to the lion, or coupling one's son with cattle. They refused to eat at the table of the common people, or to journey in their company. There was hardly a crime of which the Pharisees did not regard these "ignorant ones" as guilty, describing them as dishonest in their transactions, indelicate in their families, without honour or self-restraint. These lower-class folk were not to be permitted to bear witness, or to have the guardianship of orphans. Beginning with the shepherds who, because kept by their occupations away from public worship, were

"unlearned" and were regarded as in the lowermost circle of the social inferno, the scorn of the Pharisees extended to all wage earners. For were they not sinners, in that they lacked culture? Piety was identified with learning. We read in the sayings of their rabbis: "The ignorant is impious; only the learned shall have part in the resurrection." "No brutish man is sin-fearing, nor is one of the people of the land pious." "A common person may be killed on the Sabbath of Sabbaths, or torn like a fish." And in another of their books the Pharisaic prejudice against the labouring class again breaks out: "How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough? So every carpenter and work master that laboureth day and night — they shall not sit high in the congregation, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken." The "rabble" were outcasts from the fellowship of the learned, and therefore were "altogether born in sin."

It must be admitted that the common people repaid this Pharisaic class hatred in its own coin — so much so that in the time of Jesus the relations between them had become tense and embittered. Rabbi Eleazer declared his belief that the illiterate would murder all of the sages, if they could get along without them. It is difficult for a reader, at two millenniums remove, to conceive the tickle wherewith the parable of the "Pharisee and the Publican" tickled the ears of the working-class audience to which it was delivered. In the emphatic ring of the speaker's words at the end we can almost detect the applause amidst which that climax was shouted: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." The parable of the Prodigal

Son had the same social message, the reinstatement of the disinherited classes. Akiba as one of the proletariat expressed his hatred of the scornful scholar set characteristically: "If I only had a lettered man I would bite him like an ass."

Jerusalem was the centre of this upper-class snobbishness, and Galilee's working-class population was in large part its butt. The Jerusalem aristocracy was fertile in coining epithets against them: "Those Galilean pigs," and, "Galilean blockhead." The very accent of Galilee was an offence in the haughty society circles of the capital. Jesus, not being designed by his parents for a rabbi, had not studied at college. Hence the rulers called him "samaritan," which was a nickname of theirs for one who had never been to college — "How hath this man learning though he hath not studied?" The ruling class had so confidently affirmed religion to be only for the classes of wealth and leisure and learning that the lower orders, the "babes and little ones" so tenderly spoken of by Jesus, had well nigh come to accept this appraisement and to regard themselves as hopelessly outlawed from the commonwealth of heaven. When therefore Jesus appeared to the Galileans and announced to this "rabble" that heaven was on their side rather than on the side of the Jerusalem set — Emmanuel, "God-on-our-side" — it was a gospel indeed, a piece of "good news" which dilated the heart of every man that heard it.

In this Galilee region The Carpenter first along confined his propaganda. He prepared there for his later campaign when he moved upon Jerusalem. For, as we have seen, his plan made it needful for him eventually

to get possession of the capital city. Jerusalem was the official centre of the Jewish race. Though the Jews of the Dispersion were scattered far, the sacredness of the Temple kept intact the nexus which bound them to their race and to Jerusalem. The magnetism which the sacred city exercised upon the hearts of Jews everywhere is seen in that roster of countries represented in the city at the time of the pentecostal feast: "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, in Egypt and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians?" No other city of the ancient world could so vie with Rome for the honour of being a world-capital. If Rome was the financial centre, Jerusalem was the religious centre of the then known world.

It was the immediately strategic point, therefore, in the campaign of The Carpenter. Once in possession there, he would have behind his propaganda the momentum of two thousand years of Jewish history. We have seen that he was psychologist enough to appraise at its full the importance of continuity with the past. The propagandist who obtains history for his ally has half won the battle. Once in control of the official machinery of Judaism, therefore, he would know how to restore that machinery to its aforetime uses of democracy — he would utilize the diaspora for heralding his proclamation of self-respect throughout the inhabited earth. Accordingly, we shall read later on that "he set his face steadfastly toward Jerusalem." However, he knew some-

thing of the opposition he would encounter in securing control of that capital seat. First along, therefore, he laboured in Galilee and raised up a following there, in order that when he confronted the capital at last it would be with a prestige and a backing which would enforce for his claims a hearing among the intrenched ruling class.

We read that his teaching tours at this time were accompanied by miracles. As to nature miracles, those namely in which the suspension of some natural law is involved, the records as we have them are too fragmentary, the evidence too unscientific, to permit the formation of an intelligent opinion. On the general subject, however, it can be stated that the democracy's interest is to exalt to the highest degree her lord and founder, the Carpenter of Nazareth. Long after the privileged class has broken with him and has transferred its worship to another, the democracy will be found championing the divineness of the Nazarene. For it will share in any increment of honour and might that are bestowed upon its founder. Wherefore if in the infinite possibilities of the future there should develop a natural science in which suspension of nature forces at the behest of transcendent personal force is established, the democracy will hail the discovery as adding new laurels to the brow of her Lord.

As to the works of healing, the difficulties in the way of their credence are less, and the evidence more full. That an authoritative and radiant personality such as that of The Carpenter should overflow its healthful energies on to impoverished natures round about, is quite consonant with the laws which we are discovering to exist in the mystic realms of the cortex and the medulla.

However, these works were but incidents in his career. They formed not the main current of the stream, but were eddies along the side. They bulked not large either in his own thought or in that of his contemporaries. Amidst the abundant depression and hysteria of that day, any spirit of marked sanity and joy moving to and fro amongst the people would leave a trail of health behind. The people were accustomed to that method of healing. The naïve indignation wherewith the ruler of the synagogue lashes the people for coming on the Sabbath day to be healed by Jesus, his matter-of-factness in commanding them to put those affairs off for week-days, is eloquent of the healing art in that age: "There are six days in which men ought to work; in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges."

Jesus viewed with unmistakable distaste the drain upon his time and strength which these works cost him. Not that he was untouched by the sickness round about him. Rather, it was because he was deeply touched; and like all true saviours of society, he aimed the axe at the root thereof. The health of the nation was too profoundly disordered. Under the conditions amidst which the toiling masses lived — exhausting labour, scant food, uncertainty of the morrow — sickness was inevitable. He might heal three or four to-day. But he knew that he was sending them back into conditions where a relapse was but a matter of time. "A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit." His programme, therefore, was one of social

sanitation. A cunning physician, he practised in the school of hygiene.

Jesus himself seems to have put a low appraisement on these healing works, relying upon other evidence to attest the authenticity of his mission and the truth of his message. "The Pharisees came forth, seeking of him a sign from heaven. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign?" Asked for the seal and confirmation of his message, he pointed to the signs of the times. He said that if they were at all weather-wise to the political and economic winds that were setting in, they would perceive that the call wherewith he was calling them was true and authentic. That it was a spirit from heaven which was upon him was proven, he said, by the democracy of his mission; for he was preaching good news to the labouring class, he was healing their heart-break, he was preaching deliverance to the slaves, the recovering of sight to the blinded, to set at liberty a proletariat trodden and bruised, and to proclaim the kingdom of self-respect, that acceptable day of the Lord. So far from his works of cure being the chief aim of his career, those works themselves were in large part the results of the joy which his social message aroused in his hearers. It was because he brought good news to the toiling masses that they bestowed upon him their confidence in utter degree — confidence, that pre-requisite in all work of therapeutics. It was in working-class Galilee that his healing gifts were particularly displayed. Outside of that district, and even in Galilee in the places where his good news was indifferently welcomed, we are told that "he performed no mighty works."

The joy that attended the "good-news" preaching of The Carpenter can with difficulty be imagined by moderns, accustomed to view religion as a scourge, a cult for the dying, a system of world renunciation. Jesus was not afraid of the good things of this world. His message had for its purpose the recovery of their earth heritage on the part of the disinherited classes. That term, "the lost," as it appears on his lips, repays study. It has not the idea of moral failure which the term has come to connote to-day. It has reference rather to social outlawry. The Prodigal Son, the "lost sheep," the "lost coin," are the outcasts of the social family. Society has disinherited them, but God has not disinherited them.

The Carpenter's proclamation of this truth constituted the "good news" which made his presence so acceptable to these outlawed classes and his words so full of grace and winsomeness. Some "Thou shalt nots" went with this proclamation; but this part of his message was subordinated. The Son of Mary was a greatly affirmative personality. His note throughout was the Eternal Yea. He left the Nay in large part to assert itself. He found the working people busied in paltry cares. They were seeking their economic salvation by piteous makeshifts — a lengthening of the work day, a cheaper grade of clothing, a poorer house to live in, more graspingness toward each other, a curtailment of the food supply, sordid scrimpings and prunings. He said to these: "Be not thus anxious. Your labour, were it unexploited, is creating wealth enough comfortably to support you and yours. The good fat earth, its udders distended with milk, has a teat for each of its offspring. Ask, and

it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. In the new order, the kingdom of man, the empire of self-respect, of which I am the herald, there will be sustenance for all. Throw yourself into this restoration movement, and you will have abundance. You of the working class are the favourites of heaven. It desires to give good gifts unto you. Your deliverance cometh not by working harder and more worriedly, but by securing a new order of society. Therefore take not this anxious thought, saying, 'What shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed.' Seek ye first the kingdom of self-respect, and all these things shall be added unto you." This is why the common people heard him hungrily. But the Jerusalemite aristocracy, in league with Rome to safeguard dividends, "took counsel together how they might destroy him."

Neglect to inquire the auditory to which the Sermon on the Mount was addressed has occasioned a mischievous and persistent misunderstanding of The Carpenter, namely, that he preached non-resistance — a misreading of the text that has been of immense perversity. In this sermon he was addressing the wage-earner class — "his sayings in the audience of the people." Ever, the tragedy of the toiling masses has been their incapacity to unite. Their economic masters, partly because fewer in number, but also because they are "in their generation wiser than the children of light," have tended ever toward a pooling of their interests. The kingdom of labour, divided against itself, is brought to desolation. This is why, through all the span of centuries, Things have commanded a

high price and Man a low price; and why property interests have been well taken care of but human interests have not been taken care of. The Jewish proletarian was notoriously a sinner in this matter of incohesion and bickerings — the vice that besets intense and independent spirits everywhere. The tendency was never more marked than at the time of Jesus — petty quarrelsomeness, an excessive love of litigation. This rending of themselves into wrangling factions — Israel's congenital failing—was to come to a head a few years later when the Roman legions finally invested Jerusalem. The city fell then — and with it the fall of the Jewish nation — not so much because of the attack outside, as because of the suicidal strifes inside. Titus engraved on his arch the sacred vessels of the Temple which he carried away to Rome, and their figures are standing to this day, engraved on the mighty stones. He took the credit; but there was no signal military skill in the conqueror. The Jews fought amongst themselves; they made the task of Titus easy. Reported Josephus: "This internal sedition did not cease when the Romans were encamped near their city walls. But although they had grown wiser by the first onset the Romans made upon them, this lasted but a while, for they returned to their former madness and separated one from another and fought it out." Jesus foretold where, if disaster came, the secret would lay: "Every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

The Carpenter sought to foster in the Jewish masses, in the best sense of the word, a class solidarity. As he looked upon them a scene of infinite wrangle met his

eye — crimination and recrimination, strifes lingual, strifes physical, strifes legal. Therefore, with militant work in mind, he enjoined upon them a life of peace amongst themselves: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the peace-makers." It was the counsel of a general who, discovering his soldiers fighting amongst themselves, commands upon them an attitude of forbearance toward one another — not in order to lessen their militancy but precisely in order to increase their militancy; for an army that takes the sword against itself has no sharpness left in that sword for the enemy.

The Carpenter was summoning the audience to whom these words were addressed, to a united, sustained, uplifted warfare against the banded enemies of the human race. Love as he understood the term is a strong, a militant trait. No man loves the people with a perfect love, unless he hates the despoilers of the people with a perfect hate. In an age of oppression there is something wrong with the man who has not a fight on his hands: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." He understood well that there are times when the only peace worth having is the peace that has to be fought for. That any offspring of Mary could be a weakling spirit, counselling to submissiveness and peace at any price, is an incredibility — she who, while she was forming his members within her, sang with exultant strain: "He hath showed strength with his arm, he hath scattered the

proud in the imagination of their hearts, he hath put down the mighty from their seats."

Jesus sought to breed a type of man that would look oppression in the face and wring its neck. In him the warrior spirit was incarnate: and all the more so in that he took not up the sword. A teacher revolutionist like Ferrero is more to be feared by the federated destroyers of the poor than an army with banners; because in him are the seeds of a hundred armies. Potent to the pulling down of strongholds is a warrior idea, more than whole parks of artillery. History presents no life career that was more militantly planned or more militantly executed, than that of the Nazareth Carpenter. To set out deliberately to proclaim self-respect to sixty million slaves, was to embark on an enterprise infinitely adventurous. He understood well the hazard to himself, and he accepted that hazard. He understood with equal discernment the explosiveness of the doctrine he was letting loose in society; he accepted that explosiveness, and with the same doggedness of spirit: "I came not to bring peace, but a sword." Sending forth his disciples, he "commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only"— the staff being a protection against assault.

Akin to this in spirit was that other series of passages in this sermon — the "beatitudes." Luke's version of these has probably more fidelity to the original, as being the rough shorthand report of the speech — Matthew's account betrays a later and a polishing hand. Luke anyway is the reporter who gives The Carpenter's message in its boldest, its most revolutionary form. He was a

physician, as his description of the woman with the twelve-years' issue of blood evidences. He had witnessed that tragic thing in the lives of the poor, the exhaustion of one's means in time of sickness before a cure is obtained — the woman in question "had spent all her living upon physicians." Therefore, since he had seen this underworld upon which Rome's gorgeous splendour rested for its economic foundation, Luke was prepared to welcome an overturning. He had no sympathy with any attempt to smooth down the "hard sayings" of Jesus so as to make them acceptable to the ruling caste. His desire was to "trace the course of all things accurately from the first."

Accordingly, Luke's version gives the beatitudes in a rough but fiery strength. And we discover that The Carpenter's reference to the "poor in spirit" was in order that they might get over being poor in spirit; he insisted that they were inheritors, in order to rouse them up to claim their inheritance. To the hungry he promised a state of society in which they would no longer be on short rations, nor would the sorrowful then be called upon to endure the brutalities which were turning their day into night. Those "Blesseds" were words of compliment and cheer to working people, and were designed to awaken their self-respect to a point where they would stand up against the invader. The Carpenter believed in the dignity of labour. The drones, parasites in the human hive, enjoying an unearned prosperity, consumers and not producers, endowed idlers living on the stored products of the past, he could not away with. The fault of the toiling masses was that they did not think of themselves as highly as they ought to think. They were

subject and satisfied. They were being trampled upon, because in deepest truth they were content to be trampled upon. Whenever, worm-like, they turned, it had been only in some spasm of destructive fury, void of persistency and of a structural programme. Therefore he sought to breed in them a consciousness of their importancy: "Ye working masses are the upholders of the world," said he; "let your light shine before men that they may see your worth. Ye are the salt of the earth; true, if ye have lost savour and are insipid, spiritless things, ye are henceforth good for nothing but to continue to be trodden under foot as ye now are. You industrialists, who have struggled so long in unrequited toil, you meek ones, whose steady labour is producing the world's wealth, shall inherit the earth, in the new order of society that I am heralding. You of the highways and the hedges are bidden to come to a supper that is being prepared for you. There is to be a regeneration, the restitution of all things. Then you will come into your own. Blessed therefore, are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled; blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh; blessed are ye when the framers of social caste separate you from their company because you are workingmen and are followers of me, a workingman; for in the kingdom of self-respect that is coming, your reward shall be great." Those "beatitudes" constitute a Bill of Rights. The Sermon on the Mount ranks high among the inflammatory manifestos of the world.

Quite otherwise than in this congratulatory strain shall we find him speaking when he is outside of Galilee, amongst Judea's upper-class circles. And even now — in

Luke — he follows up his "Blesseds" with another series, the veh divitibus — his "Woes" to the parasite, the exploiter, the well-fed idler. "Woe unto you that are rich! Woe unto you that are full! Woe unto you that laugh in your cushioned places of ease! Woe unto you of whom 'The System' speaks well!" The "world," as Jesus used the term, meant not the physical as distinguished from the spiritual. Its reach rather was economic. By it he meant the banded exploiters at the top of society, who spend wealth they have not created, and therefore spend it vaingloriously. Earned wealth is good, but unearned wealth is a corrosive in any man's life. And this class of privileged ones, receiving revenue unrighteously and therefore spending it unrighteously, is what Jesus signified by the "world." There was his antinomy. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

This then was the method Jesus employed in his attempt to awaken the proletariat of the ancient world. He stirred the people to self-respect, by announcing that heaven was on their side — that they, the working masses, were its favourites. "The common people heard him gladly."

CHAPTER VII

LAUGHTER

A MAN is known by the enemies he makes. In this respect Jesus was particularly fortunate. We have seen him as the friend of the toiling masses, identifying his own fortunes with theirs. The shadows in the picture serve by their contrast to bring out still more strongly this alignment. The opposers of The Carpenter were of the class who have opposed and oppressed the toiling masses since history began. These opposers centered at Jerusalem.

Even before the Romans came, Jerusalem had been growing rich at the expense of her outlying provinces. The supplanting of an agricultural mode of life by one increasingly commercial had played into the hands of the trader class. These gravitated to the capital city, and there had coalesced into a close-knit aristocracy of wealth and privilege. Isaiah complains of the swallowing up of the old yeoman families of the country by rich men. The coming of foreign rule was helping this process, because the fiscal burdens, which were now doubled on the backs of the people, told with special fatality on the lower classes. Poll taxes, land taxes, export taxes, property taxes, trade taxes, Temple taxes, were reducing the once sturdy agrarian class to mortgage their lands. The rich men in

Jerusalem had become nobles: that is, they had allied themselves with the governmental and ecclesiastical machinery, in order to add to their revenues the halo of sanctity and power. This official position gave them opportunities for acquiring the estates which were compelled to be mortgaged in order to pay the taxes. A moneyed aristocracy had thus grown up in Jerusalem, and intrenched itself. This set — members of the Sadducee party, for the most part — were "satisfied with the leaven of Herod." That is, they were content with any form of government which left their revenues intact. When the Romans came, therefore, these readily acquiesced in the presence of the invader. Their political principle was "peace and quietness." To preserve the status quo was their creed: "The powers that be are ordained of God." As their revenues were derived in large part from the country districts, it was to their interest that those districts be undisturbed. When therefore word came up to them in their Jerusalem palaces that a Carpenter was moving to and fro among the Galilean villages, stirring up the people, they were touched in their pocket nerve. As is ever the case when that particular nerve is struck, a quick reaction was obtained. They straightway "held a council against him."

Another source of opposition to Jesus was, as has been hinted, the Herodian dynasty. They had formerly been in possession of the governmental machinery of Palestine. But, because of the incurable restlessness of the people, they had been getting grayheaded in maintaining their hold. When therefore the Romans came and offered to extend their protectorate here also, the Herods accepted

"The System"; they became a willing member of the empire. The compact was that the Herods were to keep Palestine in subjection to the Romans, and the Romans in turn would bring to the Herods in time of revolt the military might of the empire. The bargain had been closed by Mark Antony acting for the Romans, and by Herod the Great. Until then, under a local despotism, there had been some show of constitutional government in Palestine — the consciousness that though Herod was on the throne, the ultimate source of his authority was the people, the whole congregation and assembly of the faithful. But with Herod's appointment by Mark Antony to be Rome's vassal king, the source of governmental authority shifted from the people to the Roman power. Even the pretence of constitutional forms was now abandoned. Herod ruled by force. His soldiers in the castle commanded the courts and colonnades of the Temple. He erected grim fortresses throughout the land, to keep the populace overawed. He forbade public meetings. He ramified through Palestine a system of spies and informers. Sometimes he himself skulked in disguise among the people. He used his soldiery to torture suspects. Life was forfeited even for talking together in the street.

Herod's abjection before his overlords on the Tiber was complete. Mark Antony, in the lap of Cleopatra and needing money for those dalliances, sent to Judea a demand for gold. Herod complied, resorting to proscription in order to raise the revenue demanded. Putting people to death without ruth, he even searched their coffins for jewels or money. Thus he raised a large sum

from a land already impoverished by tribute, and sent it to his Roman liege lords. He changed the name of Samaria to "Sebaste," the Greek translation of Augustus. In building Cæsarea at great expense upon the sea-coast, he halted not in his cringing slavishness until he had erected a temple there, dedicated to the worship of "Cæsar and Rome." He sent his sons to be educated in the imperial palace in Rome. His aping of Roman ways went to the extent of erecting an amphitheatre in Jerusalem, and the exhibition there every five years of gladiatorial combats in honour of Augustus. With characteristic effrontery he erected over the gate of the Temple itself a golden eagle, in token that even the souls of the people were now in bondage to the Roman state. At which unendurable stigma, the patriot heart rebelled. A seething mob gathered, and tore the eagle from its perch. In revenge Herod burned forty people alive, and executed others. This policy of fawning submission to Rome was kept up by him to the end, and by his sons after him.

The Romanizing of the land went on apace. Antony, on his marriage to Cleopatra, gave her as a wedding present the valuable plantation of palm trees at Jericho. The Lake of Galilee was becoming a fashionable watering-place for wealthy Romans. Their villas bordered its shores. The fishermen disciples were reduced to peddle their fish at the rear gates of these villas, where haughty Roman matrons lorded it over the subjugated and once independent Galilean natives. The herd of swine alongside the Lake, and against which Jesus incited the lunatic so that a panic was caused which drove them down the steep bank and into the water, were being fattened

for this colony of foreigners. Roman gourmands were partial to smoked pig's head and fricassee of sow's udder.

The attitude of The Carpenter toward the Herod family, this crafty ally of Rome, was one of uniform hostility. His clash with the Romans appears thus only indirectly, for the Herods were Rome's deputies in Palestine, and took care of such small matters as a penniless carpenter travelling through the rural districts and contenting himself with a teaching function. Rome did not set her ponderous crusher machinery at work for details as small as that. She held her legions in reserve for the great insurrections, trusting to the native oligarchy in each country to take care of minor disturbances: "If we let him thus alone all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." The direct collision, therefore, was in large part between Jesus and the local tyranny. There is not a touch of his life with the Herodian dynasty which is not one of open antagonism and loathing. The contempt with which his "Go tell that fox" was bitten out from between his teeth, is heightened by the meaning in the original, "jackal," the jackals being the natural scavengers of oriental cities. The contrast at this point with Paul is illuminating. Paul, preaching as he did subjection to the powers that be, was on good terms with Rome, and therefore was on good terms also with the Herods. Jesus, a stirrer-up instead of a quieter-down of the people, was on bad terms with Rome, and therefore was uniformly on bad terms with the Herods.

And the Herods repaid his hostility in kind. They

recognized in him an enemy to "The System," and sought to thwart him in every way. It seems that they began early: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time that he had diligently inquired." In sooth, not very observant of the amenities. In fact the awfulness of this exhibit of absolutism has led students to question the historicity of this "Massacre of the Innocents." But such an atrocity on the part of the Herods would have been by no means exceptional. And whether true or not in this particular case, it is profoundly true as a revelator of the irresponsible and degrading rule under which the people lay since the coming of Rome's empire, and permits us an insight into the methods whereby the "peace," the much besung pax Romana, was obtained. It is also true in that the incident is an index of the venom with which the official and exploiting class of that day pursued The Carpenter throughout.

Besides the Sadducee priest-nobles, and the Herodian vassals of Rome, opposition to Jesus came from a third source — already hinted — the Pharisees. The Pharisees were the church-going people of the day. They were sincerely loyal to the ecclesiastical idea, so much so that modern church writers tend to take the part of the Pharisee and to regret the severity of Jesus toward this party. For were not the Pharisees zealous for public worship, zealous for the sabbath, zealous for moral standards in society? And were they not consistent in this zeal, also? for they followed up their precept with practice. They

gave a tenth of their income to the church, were faithful in the observances of fasts and all churchly requirements, and were so keen for personal purity that they were for stoning offenders against it. Why then should Jesus have been so persistently at cross purposes with this class?

The answer is, because the Pharisees were political quietists and maintainers of caste. They sought a piety detached from the civic and economic issues of the day. Religion to them consisted in an artificial liturgy for the sabbath and in artificial rules of conduct for the other six days. Religion, in The Carpenter's sense—the consecration of secular life—was beyond their ken. So complete was their break with common affairs that they welcomed the coming of foreign rule because it took from their shoulders responsibility for such "secular" pursuits as the administration of government and permitted them to develop still further their aloofness from what Jesus styled the "weightier matters," namely, the daily affairs of life: so that when Herod, together with the Roman general Sosius, besieged Jerusalem, the leaders of the Pharisees, Sameas and Polion, had advised the people to open the city gates. The Pharisees had become willing supporters of the foreign rule.

The Carpenter's controversy with them, therefore, was that of a pious patriot opposed to pious churchmen. The gulf between them was largely that which exists to-day between the social worker and the church worker. The former seeks to enlist the interests of men in the betterment of the world, while the church, proclaiming the evil and vanity of earthly things, inculcates an austere detachment from the world. And as to-day, so then,

each regarded the other as a foe to real religion. History at last is proving that The Carpenter was right; that spirituality is like to the giant Antaeus which, by being held aloft from the earth lost his strength, but which gained new vitality every time his feet touched the ground. The Pharisees aimed at building up a church. Jesus aimed at building up society.

The parallel between then and now becomes the more striking when it is remembered that The Carpenter, as opposed to the Pharisee, was one of the "dregs" of society. He was adverse to every squint of caste, even when it was the result of a difference in moral standards and was prompted by moral motives. The spirit of social exclusiveness engendered by the church spirit in all ages — and unavoidable in that Pharisaic "come-ye-apart-and-be-ye-separate" spirit — undoubtedly produces a certain refinement in the inhabiters of its exclusive circle. But those nicer traits are bought at the cost of a broad democracy of spirit and an elemental ruggedness, which cost is a distinct offset to the gain and must be computed in footing up the balance. The democrat of Nazareth was so ultra in his democracy that he could not away with caste of any kind. He had no time for moral snobs, any more than for social snobs. The fellowship to which he invited took in the outcasts. He likened it to a wedding supper: "So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests." It is a field in which the tares and the wheat grow up together. It is a fish net "that was cast into the sea

and gathered of every kind." The morality he preached was not a mountain-peak elevation of the few, obtained by a valley depression of the many; rather, he aimed at the gradual elevation of the entire social landscape. A refinement obtained by quarantining to a safe distance all the badness that is in the world, lacks vitality and will not carry far in the age of democracy which is coming. The democracy cares for efficiency quite as much as for goodness. In fact, the only goodness it recognizes is one that prepares a man for robust contact with his fellows.

The Carpenter was what would be known to-day as a "good mixer." Though he jealously guarded hours of retirement, wherein he nurtured his own soul, he felt at home with people of the world even to the point of conviviality. The Pharisees were scandalized at him. They were sincerely disturbed at his free and easy companionships with the "dregs" of society — among whom were drunkards and harlots — as tending to break down the safeguards of morality: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." On the sabbath question, also, Jesus was shamelessly unconventional. The theologically-minded Jews of Jerusalem had long looked askance at the whole set of Galileans, breezy and mentally fresh from the bracing air of their hills. And here now was one of these low-caste ones, more unconventional even than his fellows. Jesus came into the Pharisees' close-shut and fetid atmosphere like a gust of wind. He proclaimed liberty to those who were captive in the hard and narrow conventions of society. His aim was to break the chains and let the human spirit free.

This was at the bottom of his attitude toward property. Property rights require peace and order and carefulness; human rights require genius and freedom. Jesus looked upon any large accumulation of goods as impedimenta. It carried with it spiritual disadvantages, because it shackled the man, making him cautious and conventional. Property makes for immobility. Property is a natural born coward, and opposes a Chinese rigidity to every suggestion of change. Here and there a propertied individual gets over being timid and becomes a free man; but this is an acquired trait. Natively the pocket-book has a weak heart—gets palpitation easily. Regard for the pocket-book makes for mediocrity, for a "safe," that is, a conventional career, timorous of change. Jesus was a foe to anæmia in all of its forms. He called people to live on the plus side of life rather than on the minus side. He even held that it is better to go too far in the plus direction rather than not far enough. The elder brother in the parable has one fault, he was incurably commonplace — uninteresting respectability. This is why he suffers in contrast with the adventurous younger brother. The curse of a property-ridden civilization is its unendurable dulness. Under the timidity which the cares of wealth enforce, spontaneity is crushed out, originality is choked; genius dies, smothered beneath the "goods of this world." Jesus could not sufficiently stress his contempt of the man who has gained the whole world but has lost spirit. He paid a visit to the Phœnician coast. He saw there a richly material civilization. Nevertheless he refused to be impressed by the dye works, the glass works, and the

great ship-building yards of Tyre and Sidon; for he could discover in that busy mammon no idealism, no high thinking, no meanings. Their busy heaping up of materialities, therefore, was not progress in a forward direction. It was progress in a backward direction; for man was being cluttered up, hidden under a mountain of rubbish. The crowded slums of Tyre were not more squalid than the glut of goods of her master class.

There is a joy breathing forth in The Carpenter which is unmistakable. His words are full of wedding bells — an unabashed joyousness. There was in him a sprightliness, a vivacity, which won him widest welcome. He was the gladly greeted guest at the festivities of the people. They "received him joyfully." The people saw in this man a contributor to their joys rather than a restrainer of the merriment. His parables peal with the laughter of the social feast and the dance of some glad surprise. To be sure, the rumble of distant thunder is heard in those parables, and there are black clouds gathering on the horizon. But those portents are of evil omen only for the oppressor class, and bring no bodings of ill to workers.

This Carpenter was a glad attendant at weddings. Jewish weddings lasted a week. They were commonly accompanied with scenes which would be considered by some to-day highly indecorous. But Jesus at these occasions was quite at home. It bristles from every page of the record, his fine, unashamed earthliness, a good, wholesome carnality. His heart within him laughed pleasantly at the weddings with their almost bacchic revelries, and at the dionysian joys of the honey-

moon. As to-day, so then there were those who confused mournfulness with religion. These chided him for the happy-heartedness of himself and his fellows. He accepted the taunt — and went them one better; said that he was a bridegroom, and his fellows were the licensed "children of the bride chamber." The "good" people were disturbed at the verve, the dashing attitude of this Workingman toward the old moralities. Out of a sincere conscience they felt that he was on the side of Satan — yes, that he was in cahoots with the prince of the devils.

So serene is his belief — his confidence in the native goodness of man and the native fruitfulness of the earth — that there is in him a pervasive note of humour. Humour is the mark of a mind at ease. It looks down upon the contradictions of life from a higher level, beholding Plato's "whole tragedy and comedy of life" from an overcomer's standpoint. The Carpenter had disciplined a native gift of raillery to a high pitch of efficiency. Says Milton: "The vein of laughing hath ofttimes a strong and sinewy force in teaching and confuting." Jesus had it, "strong and sinewy." In narrating the scene with the "Woman Taken in Adultery," a modern biographer suggests that Jesus stooped down and wrote upon the ground to avert his eyes, in order not to stain his maidenly soul with a sight of the woman. The feminist note, and of a piece with the sentimentalism that has gushed so copiously about this personage. A man does not cough and stutter in the presence of fleshly facts. Far more probably the reason why Jesus glued his face to the ground was in order to conceal a countenance that was peril-

ously near to bubbling over. A coterie of "saints" had been thinking to bugle abroad their own stainlessness by zeal against this woman — a showpiece of the chronic hypocrisy which caste engenders when framed on lines of puritanism. Jesus punctures their solemn pretentiousness. The ridiculous plight to which they were reduced, and the spectacle as they slouched away one by one, was indeed something to awake homeric laughter.

Much of the charm of Jesus was due to the bursts of merriment which his words and expressions evoked. Often this humour was of the grim sort, full of sting and menace; as when he termed the arrogant magnates of the day, "sweet lords." At other times it had a charming playfulness, so that children were magnetized to him. He had been a boy himself. He knew what play was. The games of childhood then were what they are now — to ape the doings of the grown-ups. In the market place he saw troops of children piping or at mock-wailings:

> A wedding or a festival,
> A mourning or a funeral;
> As if his whole vocation
> Were endless imitation.

It had a fascination for him. It was because they saw in him one of themselves, that children gathered at his knee. In a deep sense Jesus never grew up. To the disciplined vigours of manhood he joined the wondering wisdom and the joyousness of childhood — the wide-open hand and heart. A genius is one who is a child at forty. Jesus championed the cause of genius against the care-laden dulness of a civilization cowed by its possessions.

The social outcasts, "the lost," saw in this Carpenter one of themselves. On one occasion a member of the Pharisee party, Simon, probably out of curiosity to see this man who was making such a stir, invited Jesus to dinner. But in his welcome he withheld from his guest the customary courtesies — ablution of the feet and anointing of the head. Simon probably supposed that this Workingman, being a member of the lower class, had not been accustomed to treatment as an equal by those in the upper circles, and that he would not notice the matter — Jesus and all twelve of his disciples were wage-earners who had received only a common school education. During the meal a woman of the street enters with her hair down. Among the Jews, for a woman to wear her hair loose signified that she was a harlot. She notices the affront to which Jesus has been subjected. She knows too that he is a member of the lower class, along with herself. Remembering the indignities to which she has been for so long subjected by reason of caste, her heart spills in a burst of fellow feeling. She attempts herself to perform the courtesy that has been denied him. With her hot tears she washes the dust of travel from his feet, and wipes them with the hair of her head. The Pharisee catches hold of the incident as an argument against a man who would set himself up as leader — taunts him with associating with these immoral ones. Jesus makes no attempt to duck. Without a wince of embarrassment he ranges himself on the side of the woman and against the caste pride of the Pharisee.

It was not strange, therefore, that Jesus was held by the moral caste to be dangerous to religion and to good

morals. The Pharisees, founding on their teacher, the gentle Hillel, and preaching the doctrine of political submissiveness and aloofness from the temptations of life, were horror stricken at this breezy workingman from Nazareth who was so gustily original and so audaciously defiant of the "tradition of the elders." His strong thoughts came into their circle like a draught of fresh air into an overheated room; the frantic invalids within sought desperately to reshut the door. Add to this that the Pharisees, "who were covetous," saw in this Carpenter a disturber of the economic system from which they drew revenues wherewith to support their cultured and pious withdrawment from the activities of the world, and we have all the material for an explosive controversy such as was not long in coming.

The Carpenter did not seek the controversy. In awakening the proletariat he was doing a resultful work, and wished to remain as long as possible unnoticed. He knew that once the ruling caste discovered the dynamite which his doctrine of The Kingdom was spreading through society, they would seek straightway to terminate him. Therefore he shunned publicity. When the storm was raging which ended in the execution of the Baptist, Jesus fled that part of the country. The importance of his message padded his footsteps with discretion. The atmosphere of the day was heavy with espionage. Hired assassins were a part of the machinery of government. Informers lurked in the crowds at every street corner. From Rome as its nest and centre, a cobweb of spydom spread out over the world. A civilization in which one half of the people were slaves, could maintain itself only

by terrorism and treachery. The paid informers were experts at their trade. They insinuated themselves into every group: so much so that they poisoned all social intercourse; a man could never be sure of his fellow. Eavesdropping had become a profession. Not overcoloured is the plaint of one: "A soldier in civil dress sits by you, and begins to abuse the emperor; his simplicity allures you to equal frankness. And chains and imprisonment follow." Every man feared his shadow.

A description of the tenseness of the situation was given by Jesus in his caution to the disciple group: "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." They recognized the aptness of the metaphor. Romulus and the she-wolf were dear to the Romans — they rejoiced to trace their descent from a beast of prey. Far from wishing to conceal this legend of their origin, they exploited it — put a statue, the "She-wolf Suckling the Twins," in the market place. A move not altogether devoid of shrewdness. To an empire based on intimidation it was distinctly an advantage to have this kind of a reputation concerning them get abroad. Jesus's hearers knew poignantly what he meant in likening the people to sheep ravaged day and night by a pack of wolves. It was not cowardice, therefore, but the "wisdom of the serpent," to caution his disciples to an inconspicuous work for a while — eschewing the sword and contenting themselves with a teaching campaign, silently dropping in the soil of the heart that seed of revolution, the Kingdom of Self-Respect. He took pains to assure them that there would be a harvest from this seed-sowing. Some of it would be wasted. But others would fall upon deep

soil, take root, spring up, and bring forth fruit, "some thirty fold, some sixty fold, some a hundred fold."

So great was his caution, so eager was he for an undisturbed work of undermining the despotism of the day before being dug out and dragged to the surface, that he was betrayed into using an expression which, though a gem of repartee at the time, has been seized upon by those who would misconstrue his teaching, as a handle whereby to pervert his mission: "Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's." These words were spoken to a group of informers. We are distinctly certified that the enemies of Jesus had "sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor." It seems on the face of it a bit unfair to catch up a sentence thrown off under such circumstances, and base on it the colossal claim that Jesus was a preacher of political quietism, particularly as the sentence is prefaced by the warning, "but he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them." If there is Scripture warrant for answering an ass according to his assininity, there is surely provision also for answering a fraud according to his fraudulency. The trap was shrewdly baited. If he disallowed the tribute, Rome would take affront. If he legitimatized the tribute, his followers would take affront. We are told that in the company which put the question to Jesus were "the Herodians." From what we have seen of Herod and all his works, it had surely been superogatory in The Car-

penter, even had his ideals run in that direction, to encourage that precious set in further toadyism toward Rome.

In putting the crafty question, they handed him a coin. That coin bore the image of the imperator, a man who demanded for himself divine honour. Its legitimacy, therefore, was repudiated by every faithful son of Israel. The Jews carried their democracy so far that they refused to countenance the arts of portraiture and engraving; no images of human conquerors are found painted on their walls or carved in marble to adorn Old Testament temples. When Pilate sought to carry into Jerusalem the Roman standards which bore the image of the Roman imperator, the Jews protested so violently that he had to revoke the order. Again, when Caligula issued his insane decree that his statue be erected in Jerusalem, "many ten thousands of Jews" met the imperial messenger long before he reached the sacred city, and dogged his steps with their frantic protests even as far as Tiberias. He asked if they meant war. "No," said they, "but we rather die than break our laws; and they threw themselves on their faces ready to be slain." So also on the present occasion. The answer of Jesus to those who would entrap him can with entire legitimacy be interpreted as a counsel to render back unto the Romans everything that belonged to them, and banish them from the land — a proclamation of non-intercourse, including an embargo even on their coinage. Rome and things Roman were to him so despicable that when he was brought

before Pilate's tribunal he denied its right to pass judgment upon him one way or the other; he met its inquisitionings with silence — tongue-tied with contempt. One of the gifts of The Carpenter was a swiftness of repartee. And never was this gift displayed more felicitously than in the present instance — dodging one horn of a dilemma without impaling himself on the other. He countered the craftiness of his adversaries without giving either side a handle against him. Of the enigmatical utterance we read: "This saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

That the Son of Mary should have sought to bolster up the throne of a Tiberius, a Caligula and a Nero, is an interpretation tenable only by those who know not what that throne meant. Therefore let us hear from Froude once more. Froude is writing of the Roman state in the period immediately preceding this Tiberius era. But the latter's parable of "The Flies on the Sick Soldier," attests that the formation of the empire had brought no noticeable change for the better. Says Froude: "This was the state of the Roman dominion: decent industrious people in the provinces given over to have their fortunes stolen from them, their daughters dishonoured, and themselves beaten or killed if they complained, by a set of wolves calling themselves Roman senators — and these scenes not localized to one unhappy district, but extending through the entire civilized part of mankind."

The poison Rome scattered abroad came back to plague her own arterial system:

> On that hard Pagan world, disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell.

Ovid's "Golden Rome, that holds the treasures of the conquered world," was being outwardly swept and garnished — the use of the matchless Carrara marble giving to her a new architectural garb. But within, she was full of extortion and excess. Rome had become a rigid plutocracy. "Be it," says Juvenal, "that to gold, the fiend, we have no temples erected, no altars to the jingling coin; yet mammon is enthroned supreme god." Legacy hunting was become a profession. Ghouls--in-waiting everywhere, flattering their expected testators; so that the fore-measuring of dead men's shoes ceased to attract comment. Petronius does not overcolour his picture of the inheritance grabbers: "In this city all men whatsoever belong to one of two sets, the anglers and the angled. A man who has heirs is ostracised, and leads a shamed and lonely life. It is a city like a field during a plague — corpses and carrion birds." Love-boys were sold at auction. The righteous man and reliable, says Martial, "could find no security in Rome; no hope of making his fortune was there for any one who was not a pimp, or a toper, an informer, who would not seduce his friend's wife, or earn the love-fee of an ancient beldame." Horace recognized the damnosa hereditas that was upon the city. He cried out: "Our

fathers were worse than our grandfathers, we are worse than our fathers, our children will be worse than we"; and in one of his odes he promises an immortal fame to any one who will restore to Rome her aforetime morality. That The Carpenter should have given a clean bill of health to the indecencies for which Rome and her Cæsars had come to stand, is beyond credence. A little later, and we shall find martyrs of "the Name" dying unspeakable deaths by the thousand for their refusal to "render unto Cæsar" the respect he demanded — a most unfortunate misunderstanding on their part, if their Master himself had meant to make capitulation to Rome. Jesus did not spend his lifetime in beating the air. On the contrary he speaks of his liberation movement as being directed against a specific adversary. He likens it to a widow who pleaded with a judge, "avenge me of mine adversary." The judge, importuned, at last consents: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"

No. This proof-text on which, as on a single peg, the devotees of world-forgetfulness hang their claim that The Carpenter was a pietistic, non-worldly rhapsodist, becomes on examination a most insecure hold for them. On a previous occasion, despite the jocularity of his tone, there are signs that he seriously contemplated withholding any further tribute money to the Roman invader. After a council with his disciples, however, he consented and told Peter to go fishing and raise the tax in that way from the money the fish would bring; but he explained that in consenting to this he was moved by expediency alone: "Lest we give offence." So in the present instance.

The fact that the spies sent out against him hit upon this particular question, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar," in order to "take hold of his words, that they might deliver him unto the Governor," is eloquent of the general idea as to what his attitude was toward Cæsars and Cæsarisms. Wherefore we conclude that as it happened to those ancient adversaries of his who "took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk," so also with the quietists in every age since; in their efforts to wrest The Carpenter from his basic hold in the economic, they can not "take hold of his words."

CHAPTER VIII

THE RAPIDS

But precautions were of no avail. In the doctrines of this mild-mannered teacher from Galilee the ruling caste detected danger; for the toiling masses had a strange way of awakening to his words as to the calling of trumpets. Instead of the dead and sodden mass of humanity which their eyes had been accustomed to behold — spiritless, sunk in despair — those oligarchs now beheld a coming to life of the lower classes wherever The Carpenter visited — a hope beginning to sparkle in their eye, an unwonted vibrancy in their tone, a more upstanding carriage of their person — the kingdom of self-respect is come nigh unto them, and they are pressing into it. This was a dangerous state of affairs for the privileged order. The local aristocracy had not only their own position and revenues to conserve, but a responsibility to the Romans in keeping the populace quiet. Therefore, "from that day forth they took counsel together."

With the gathering of opposition, the tone of The Carpenter undergoes a change. His words take on a fierceness which had not been there before. For he has not been permitted to work in Galilee unmolested. The Jerusalem oligarchy sent down spies thither, dogged his footsteps and nagged him into controversy. Therefore he leaves Galilee now, and makes incursions into the

enemy's Judea district. He throws off his aversion to publicity — comes out into the open. He meets the challenge of his adversaries. The mellow tones which he had used toward working-class Galileans with their simple and unaffected outlook upon life are no longer heard. Instead there is now hardness, a note of warning, a castigation of the privileged set, an accent of sternness unrelenting as a law of nature. If his earlier teaching had rock of iron underneath it all, there had been deepness of soil and a greenery, a genial clothing for it. Now, however, the granite crops out to the surface, sometimes with not enough verdure to veil its hard nakedness. To those who have the "Lamb of God" idea of The Carpenter, a study of his speeches in this later period of his career would be highly rewarding.

To this Judean stage of his ministry belong his strictures against the ultra-rich. They were "hard sayings" at the time, and if anything they are "harder" still to-day. The Carpenter regarded great individual fortunes in a society where there was equally great destitution as ipso facto proof that a love of material values predominates in the heart of the possessor over a love of human values, and therefore as shutting him out from the kingdom of self-respect. Jesus thought of human society as constituting one family. Anything that binds this family together is good; anything that sunders this family is bad. Vast private fortunes are a distinctly divisive force in this family group. Therefore he set himself against such fortunes; and this not only for the sake of the poor, but for the sake of the rich themselves. For a man's only happiness can come through society —

John Ball's teaching, too: "Fellowship is heaven, lack of fellowship is hell." Anything that builds a wall of separation between a man and his fellows, even though it be a wall of gold and silver and precious stones, is distinctly bad for him.

A rich young ruler comes to him. Jesus commands that he reduce his "great possessions" to a sum proportionate to his interior worth, his personal share in the creation of that wealth. Probably nine tenths of the discontent which mars the harmony of life and defeats our social destiny takes its rise in the workings of the law of testation and inheritance. People do not begrudge wealth to a creator of wealth. It is when the creator dies and passes it on to an heir who did no stroke to create it, who knows naught of its meaning, and therefore is incapable of a high directorship of it, that the begrudgment begins. Most great fortunes are annexed rather than created. Remembering this principle, much of the "hardness" of the sayings of The Carpenter in this matter of rich men disappears. "How hardly shall they that are annexers enter into the kingdom of self-respect; for it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for an annexer to enter into the kingdom of self-respect." No young man of self-respect will accept a place in human society higher than his own personal worth achieves for him. The rich young man in question was the son of his father — a member of the hereditary ruling class. He was reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strawed. Further, much of a rich man's revenue comes from the labour of women and children — an able-bodied person who is

content to live upon their backs is deficient in manliness.

That bad social dogma, the sanctity of private fortunes over every other sanctity, came from Roman law and was neither an Old Testament idea nor a part of the mental furniture of The Carpenter. It may be advisable for society to delegate to individuals some rights of private ownership, but those rights are revocable at any time. The Anglo-Saxons have followed Israel and Jesus at this point rather than Rome — witness the right of eminent domain, so firmly fixed in English common law. Not long since, Lord Coleridge, chief justice of England, declared "the right of inheritance a purely artificial right"; and he added: "A very large coal owner some years ago interfered with a high hand in one of the coal strikes. He sent to the workmen. He declined to argue, but he said, stamping his foot upon the ground, 'All the coal within so many square miles is mine, and if you do not instantly come to terms, not a hundred weight of it shall be brought to the surface, and it shall remain unworked.' I should myself deny that the mineral treasure placed by Providence under the soil of a country belongs to a handful of surface proprietors, in the sense in which this gentleman appeared to think that they did. All laws of property must stand upon the foot of the general advantage, for a country belongs to its inhabitants; and in what proportion and by what rules its inhabitants are to own its property must be settled by law; and the moment a fragment of the people set up rights as inherent in them and not founded upon the public good, plain ab-

surdities follow; for laws of property are like all other laws, to be changed when the public good requires it."

Jesus held that self-respect — to carry out our figure, good sportsmanship — required of the rich young man that he refuse to accept too long a handicap over his fellows in the race of life, and start as near as may be from the same mark with them. But he went also a step further. He exacted of the young man that he declass himself. "Come, follow me." This was the staggerer. To stay in his own set and invest his fortune in works of charity, would have been comparatively easy. Philanthropy has been fashionable in every age. Charity takes the insurrectionary edge off of poverty. Therefore the philanthropist rich man is a benefactor to his fellow magnates, and is made to feel their gratitude; to him all doors of fashion swing. But Jesus issued a veto. He denied the legitimacy of alms-giving as a plaster for the deep-lying sore in the social tissue. Neighbourly help man to man was acceptable to him, and he commended it. But philanthropy as a substitute for justice — he would have none of it. Charity is twice curst — it hardens him that gives and softens him that takes. It does more harm to the poor than exploitation, because it makes them willing to be exploited. It breeds slavishness, which is moral suicide. The only thing Jesus would permit a swollen fortune to do was to give itself to revolutionary propaganda, in order that swollen fortunes might be forever after impossible. Patchwork reformers are but hewing at a hydra. Confronted with this imperative, the rich young ruler made the great refusal. To give up his fashionable set and join himself to this company of working-

class Galileans, was a moral heroism to which he was unequal. Therefore he was sorrowful; he went away, for he had a great social standing.

Something of the same brand of atonement was evidently in the mind of Dives when he awoke to the mistake he had made — desirous to send from hell and tell his five brothers to use the family fortune in erecting a "Dives Home for the Hungry," belike with the family name and coat of arms over the front portal. Jesus would concede no such privilege. He referred those "five brethren" to "Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" — Moses being the leader of the labour movement which had given to the slaves in the Goshen brickyards their long-deferred rights; and the prophets being those ardent Old Testament tribunes of the people who had so hotly contended for the family idea of society against the exploiters and graspers at the top. Dante's idea that each sin on earth fashions its own proper punishment in hell receives confirmation in this parable. "The great gulf fixed," which constituted Dives's hell, was the gulf which he himself had brought about. For the private fortune he amassed had broken up the solidarity of society — had introduced into it a chasm both broad and deep. The gulf between him and Lazarus in this world exists in the world to come to plague him. The thirst which parched Dives's tongue, "being in torments," was the thirst for companionship, the healing contact once more with his fellows, from whom his fortune had sundered him like a butcher's cleaver. Jesus had so exalted a notion of the working class, their absence of cant, their rugged facing of the facts, their elemental

simplicities, their first-hand contact with the realities of life, that he regarded any man who should draw himself off from them in a fancied superiority, as immeasurably the loser thereby, and as putting himself "in torments."

At the same time that he castigated the privileged orders, The Carpenter was at pains to point out that workingmen have obligations. The kingdom of self-respect bites both ways. Those at the bottom of the social mass could fail to enter into it equally with those at the top. "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them;" or as "The International" of 1870 phrased it, "no duties without rights, no rights without duties." The new order of society which he was announcing would create privileges for the toiling masses; but it would also create obligations; and he stressed the obligations quite as strongly as the privileges. One of these obligations was fidelity to contract. He pictures a group of labourers in the market place agreeing to work for a specified sum. Others, eleventh-hour men — it is expressly stated that their idleness until that hour had not been their fault — enter into the day's work at the same figure. Upon being paid off that night, the first group complain because the late-comers get as much as they. This spirit the parable tenderly but firmly rebuked: "Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny?"

The programme of The Carpenter had in it no mechanical and flat equality. No organization of society has yet been devised that relieves the individual of the hot fight with sin, the hourly wrestle with his own lower and

selfish nature. There can be devised a social system that will help the individual in that fight — that will give him a chance: and this is all that Jesus promised. Helpfulness could do no more. To every man a chance and the place in society to which his talents entitle him — that was his economic platform. The dexterous man will always be higher up than the incompetent and the gawk. The ten-talent man and the two-talent man are not equal, and no system of society can make them so. To be weighed in an even balance is all that the inhabiters of the kingdom of self-respect will ask. Jesus would not have committed the mistake of saying, "all men are born free and equal." He would have put it, "all men are born free to become equal."

However, despite the sanity and real constructiveness of his teaching — for there is nothing so safe for society as justice — the privileged caste multiplied their enmities against The Carpenter and hedged his way ever more narrowly. In the fact of his association with publicans they sought a handle against him, seeking by means of it to break his popularity with the people. If his enemies could have proved their point here, they would indeed have forged a telling weapon against him. For the publicans were unpopular — and justly so. They were the exactors of the trade taxes for the oppressive oligarchy at the top. They sat at "the receipt of custom," which was at the gate of a city or the end of a bridge, and collected a customs duty on all merchandise. They were the underlings of the hated Roman system of tribute, and were regarded by the patriots as betrayers of the cause of popular rights. It is important to note, therefore,

that Jesus did not defend these publicans. On the contrary he admitted their wrong doing. He likened them to sick people, who needed medical attention, and he explained that his companionship with this class was in the capacity of a physician who was trying to cure them. They had been lured by the glitter of Roman gold, and needed therefore to be brought into the kingdom of self-respect. He affirms that he was rendering the popular cause a service in winning back to it as many of these renegades as possible: "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." "Wisdom is justified of her children."

Jesus taught the people that they should display as much practical sagacity in advancing their cause as their enemies did in opposing that cause. In the Parable of the Unjust Steward he enforced the need of shrewdness in combating shrewdness. The steward who got the better of his rich overlord was simply meeting the overlord on his own ground. That capitalist lord was an iniquitous man, and the steward, in entering his employ, was iniquitous per se. There was no pretence of justice on either side. Once started on an iniquitous game, the steward played it hard; and the lord commended him. Jesus, with his red-blooded masculine make-up, admired a successful villain more than he did an unsuccessful villain. If, therefore, the bad men display shrewdness, how important that the good men should display shrewdness, and in even greater degree! In exhorting the adherents of the liberation movement, therefore, to cultivate the same cool and far-seeing practicality which self-seeking men use in compassing their ends, Jesus was

uttering a truth of perennial freshness. Too often a cause that has in it much of promise for humanity comes to naught, because its promoters display not "the wisdom of the serpent." That often "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," meets with confirmation on history's every page.

The Carpenter admired a thoroughbred type of man. He appraised a human life for its plus value. He had more respect for a courageous bad man than for a weak-kneed good man. "Either make the tree good and its fruit good," said he, "or else make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt." The Romans, with their naked avowal of brutality and their cynical disclaimer of all idealistic motives, were preferable to the Pharisee type which, while making high-sounding pretensions, had nevertheless "their inward parts full of ravening and wickedness." The best results are obtained where the oppressors of the people are open in their avowal of oppression, and where the defenders of the people are equally open in their opposition to those oppressors. John the Evangelist, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and who was in a position to learn him perhaps better than any other, exclaims amid those battle pictures in Revelation his disgust with the middle class type that is neither one thing nor the other: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Out-and-out badness has not so corroding an effect on character as shame-faced goodness; for the latter loses its self-respect, and psychology abundantly teaches that that is the supreme loss, even the

loss of chastity not telling fatally in characters such as Rousseau or Franklin or Jefferson, where, through some deficiency of early training, it brought no weakening of self-respect.

These doctrines were too robust for Palestine's ruling caste, saturated with cant and honeycombed with toadyism. And this series of audacious and vituperative parables intensified the opposition against him: so much so that Jesus begins to see disappointment ahead, and his words take on a tinge of bitterness. It is now that he points out with vehemence the perilous direction society is taking. The economic distress is mounting day by day. The avowed policy of the empire is bringing forth its perfect work. Slaves are being degraded into a deeper degradation; freemen are being pushed nearer to the verge of slavery. The rich are getting more rich, and the poor are increasingly impoverished. It was the vaunt of Augustus that he found Rome brick and left her marble. Perhaps true. But he should have added the other side of the picture: he found the provinces marble and left them brick. What though Italian villas were becoming resplendent with Greek marbles, with pictures, modellings, and weavings from oriental art shops? What though architects in Rome were working overtime to make the Palatine Hill sumptuous with all manner of beauty? It was the barbaric West adorning itself with plumage plucked alive from the quivering East.

From its frequency of appearance in the parables of The Carpenter, it would seem that the relation of debtor and creditor was becoming well nigh universal. He perceives that men are cheap,

and are daily becoming cheaper; things are dear, and are daily becoming dearer. The poverty at the bottom of the social lump is attended with a waxing opulence and ostentation at the top. In Rome and in the centres of the provincial oligarchies there is a sound of revelry, and it is becoming boisterous. The last restraint is cast off. Gluttony and pomp and lust are in high carnival. Gorged by the pillage of the proletariat, the exploiters are hard put to it to use up the revenues that are flowing in so merrily. For the nervous system has limits. It will respond to a certain amount of titillation, beyond which neurasthenia and madness lie. With many of them this limit has been reached. In the novel of Petronius, we see within the palaces a scene of orgy, a searching beyond nature for new nerve stimuli — attempts to get out of life more than there is in it.

Jesus foresaw that this widening of the chasm portended disaster. A condition in which "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed" is an unstable equilibrium for society, and cannot last. Accordingly beneath all of his outgivings now there is heard the rumble of an approaching storm. So clearly is the débacle foreshadowed to his mind that he fails to see how any can be blind to its approach. The social unrest seething in the masses can have but one event: "When ye see a cloud rise out of the West, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" Let it be remembered that this was thirty-five years

before the storm, the Jewish war of liberation, actually broke. In intensity of combat and its results on history — sad results — few wars have equalled it. The Carpenter's forecast of that conflict, a forecast which was fulfilled almost in detail, is one of the most statesmanly predictions which the record of the mind of man affords.

This is his picture of the social earthquake that was already beginning to heave: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights. And when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter therein. For these be the days of vengeance." His picture of the sickening of heart of Jerusalem's oligarchy as they felt the heave of the social crust under their feet, "men's hearts failing them for fear," is paralleled by the description Tacitus gives of the dread in the autocracy when they saw at last the fruit of their oppressions beginning to mature — a period which would be "rich in disasters, savage with battles, the swallowing up or overthrow of cities, the pollution of sacred functions."

Society was already in the rapids. The Carpenter pointed out this fact to the rulers; he entreated them to hark for a moment to the roar of the cataract toward which the current was bearing them. But his warning only set them against him the more. If the people were thus seditious, as he said they were, so much the more reason for the master class to stop the mouth of this carpenter

fellow who "stirreth up the people." Accordingly they formed a coalition against him. This coalition could have but one result.

The records have preserved to us his burst of heart when he saw that his career was perhaps to come untimely to an end. The programme he had proposed, of making Israel a missionary nation to preach the kingdom of self-respect to the trodden proletariat everywhere, was a programme so reasonable, so continuous with her best Old Testament conscience, that he had counted on being able to win Jerusalem officially to it. He could prove to her that this was a necessary step for Israel's own safety as a nation; for in the past it was because Israel had held aloof from the oppressed classes of other races that she had been overtaken by the same oppression. He enforced this teaching by two contemporary happenings. Pilate had ruthlessly slain some Galileans. Jesus pointed to it as an illustration of the bloodthirsty character of the Roman rule, which would in time overtake them all: "I tell you, except ye get a new mind, ye shall all likewise perish." Also, a tower in Jerusalem fell one day, killing eighteen people. He used it to drive home to his hearers that, unless they brought about a change of affairs, all of the walls and towers of Jeruaslem would fall in a horrible war, and then there would be a taking of human life in earnest: "I tell you, unless ye get a new mind, ye shall all likewise perish."

Looking back to that time from the clearer light of today, the plan which The Carpenter had marked out was no chimera, but had everything in its favour. The Jews had already glimpsed the idea that they were to be a

missionary nation. Those words of Isaiah-of-the-Exile were echoing just then in many hearts: "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." An official word spoken by Jersualem's sanhedrim — the diaspora throughout a hundred nations would have caught the torch and relayed it unto the ends of the Roman dominion. Democracy, the rights of the worker, the kingdom of self-respect — the proletariat everywhere was waiting for that message. With the propulsion of a united Israel behind that word, the Roman legions would have been powerless to check its propaganda. It would have converted many in those legions themselves unto it — as a fire in the forest transforms cold dead things into its own nature, and thus receives constantly fresh increments of propulsion. In the coming to them of The Kingdom, the proletariat of the ancient world would have been redeemed both from bondage to taskmasters and also from bondage to their own lower natures; the Orient would have been rescued from becoming the desolation which it is to-day; a thousand years of night would have been saved to Europe; the Jew, finding his life by losing it, would have become a dew of refreshment upon the face of the earth; and christendom would have been spared the social crisis which, too long deferred, is now demanding settlement with a ghastly bill of arrearages.

But Jerusalem knew not the time of her visitation. The hold of caste and privilege was too firm upon her. She had become inoculated with the empire's supersti-

tious reverence for Privilege and its irreverence for People. Her first thought was for vested rights. And in saving those rights she lost them. Perhaps there are no sadder words in literature, both in the heartbreak that uttered them and in the omen of ill which their utterance boded, than the lamentation of The Carpenter when the disappointment was upon him: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings; and ye would not!"

CHAPTER IX

COLLISION

It was characteristic of The Carpenter, as soon as one edifice of hope crumbled, to begin the construction of another. His first plan, that of winning the officialdom of the capital city to the liberation movement, was miscarrying. The tenure of his own life, amid the daily hazards by which he was surrounded, was becoming uncertain, so bitter was the exploiter class because of his inflammatory work among the people. He must provide against every contingency. An accident to himself must not stop the work. Accordingly he makes provision for the propaganda of The Kingdom if he should be taken away. Some time before this he had sent forth a band of seventy emissaries on a preaching tour. On their return they reported a measure of success. He was overjoyed, for it was proof that the kingdom of self-respect had vitality in itself — was not dependent on his immediate presence. So that he exults, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven!" He now strengthens his followers to stand alone. He draws in to himself a few chosen spirits, and prepares them, should anything happen to himself, to take the leadership. Little by little he accustoms them to the thought that sometime or other he must be taken from them; saying, "the Son

of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes." Knowing the holding power of a personal attachment, he seeks to fasten his following to himself by the ligature of a personal loyalty. His death is to make no difference in their relations with him, for he states that he will still be with them.

It is undeniable, from any study of the record, that The Carpenter assumed a divine title, and sought from his followers a degree of loyalty which amounted to nothing less than worship. This has scandalized many since, and was indeed an offence to some in that day. For we read, "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." There were those in his own Nazareth who were offended at his assumption of a so great title; and for a time a coolness was threatened even from some of his own family. Nevertheless he persisted in the claim; and a grateful world to-day declares him to have been in the right. In taking the step, he had in the imperator Octavius a notable precedent. The title "augustus," which that emperor assumed, carried with it an implication of divineness. Much what the term "augustus" meant to the Roman of that day, the term "christ" meant to the Jew. The habit of deifying mortals was familiar. An inscription carved to celebrate the birthday of the Emperor Augustus reads: "Not only has he surpassed the good deeds of men of earlier time, but it is impossible that one greater than he can ever appear. The birthday of God has brought to the world glad tidings that are bound up in him. From his birthday a new era begins." Heaven

was thought of as very close to the earth — they were in such an intimate relationship one with the other that each sent to and received from the other duly accredited ambassadors.

The step of assuming the title "christ" seems to have caused The Carpenter pause for a while. We find him sounding his disciples as to the sentiment of the general public toward him. He gets a various reply. "But whom say ye that I am?" Outspoken, loyal-hearted Peter exclaims, "Thou art the Christ!" It is the deciding moment. With an exultant committal, Jesus exclaims his gratitude to Peter for so orotund a confidence: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah: thy name means Rock; and upon this rock I will build my cause." From that time he is to his followers more than a man; he is the divine man. Rome had buttressed its "Empire of the Rights of Property" by surrounding it with a religious sanction — the idolatry of the Cæsars! "To the genius of the divine Julius, father of his country, whom the senate and Roman people placed among the number of the gods," ran the senate's decree. The Carpenter meets them on their own ground. He also assumes the title and prerogatives of divinity, thereby investing his "Empire of the Rights of Man" with a sanction equally high, equally authoritative. Rome's empire enforced the worship of her emperors by the drawn sword. Democracy's empire does not enforce the worship of The Carpenter by the drawn sword. To the query, "can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" it answers, "come and see."

As his career advances and the opposition intensifies in bitterness, Jesus hardens his note of austereness in treating of the privileged class. He perceives that a man pickled and tanned in the all-sacredness of property rights, and this through a lifetime, has lost the social conscience, is practically in hopeless case, and must be treated as an enemy of the human race. Therefore he draws a sharp line, marking off these unregenerate ones. He pricks them for proscription. He announces that men of a persistently anti-social spirit are not to be dealt with mercifully forever, but are after a while to be cast out from the company of the socially minded and to be destroyed. In the Dives parable, Abraham's nonchalant conversation with the chap in hell is almost creepy in its gruesomeness. The patriarchal father in heaven is exquisitely courteous to the poor fellow, but denies to his torments one whit of mitigation. The sheep and the goats in the parable are sharply divided; so must a stern dealing be dealt to every one who "layeth up treasure for himself" and is regardless of the treasure of social solidarity. To hawk and tear at the fabric of society's oneness by means of economic wrong, was to him the great sin; he could not acquit it of blood-guiltiness. Jesus was lenient toward sins of the flesh. The fact that it was his enemies who brought before him the woman taken in adultery, "that they might have to accuse him," whispers that his general attitude toward this class of offenders was notoriously one of tenderness. Sins of the flesh are never long in coming to light; individual mistreadings, they bring their own punishment swiftly, surely. Small need, therefore, that society step

in here with harsh penalties. But economic sins are not so soon discoverable. These lie hidden deep in the social structure. They work their harm indirectly, at long remove from the initiating cause. They are long-range guns, masked, noiseless, smokeless; they kill and keep on killing, and the source of the death is not perceived. These are the dangerous sinners.

Jesus did not toy with conscience, that drama of the soul with God. He inculcated a sense of sin, he sought to sharpen the pangs of guilt. But it was social sin he hit at. The pangs he inflicted were guilt pangs over a society deflowered and dismembered by economic iniquity. Jesus hunted this class down with an unbending austerity. No hint of softness in his conception of the kingdom that he is ushering into the world. He regards democracy as an elemental force, moving down the centuries with might irresistible, and crushing gainsayers like a falling millstone. Those who oppose this force will be frustrated; and those whom it opposes will be dashed into bits: "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Therefore we hear words of sentence from his lips, hard to the point of harshness: "Depart from me, ye cursed"; "cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness"; he "will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."

While he is in the midst of these castigations of the anti-social members of the human family, the time comes round for the celebration of the spring festival. To this passover feast will assemble in Jerusalem devout Jews

from the diaspora of all the world. It is the time of times for The Carpenter to proclaim his message simultaneously to representatives of the proletariat in every country — regions as far-sundered as the Tigris, the Nile, and the Tiber. This passover festival commemorated the delivery of Israel from her slavery in Egypt. It was her annual Independence Day, the anniversary of her economic liberation. But the freedom which they had then obtained under Moses had not endured. A bondage worse than that of Egpyt was now upon the land. It is accordingly a fit moment in which to get a hearing for the new liberation to which The Carpenter is summoning the people. He sets out to Jerusalem to be present at this paschal season.

It appears that he has some idea, as soon as this passover shall be ended, of making a tour of the world. For we find the ruling caste questioning among themselves concerning such a move on his part, as though it were a topic of general conversation: "Will he go unto the dispersed among the nations, and teach the nations?" Such a tour would have been his logical next step. The Jews of the Dispersion had by this time come to be a distinct, an officially recognized section of the nation. Indeed they were getting to be a more important section than the one in Palestine itself. For the furtherance of his propaganda, they would be of strategic value to The Carpenter just now. For through their close contact with the proletariat of the various countries they would be so many roads already opened whereby he could reach the toiling masses in world-wide commonalty. Working-class Galilee was already with him. With

the dispersion also won to his cause, he would be able to get along without Jerusalem until the force of Jewish public opinion outside would compel her traitorous oligarchy to capitulate to him. The fact that the likelihood of such a world tour by The Carpenter suggested itself to his enemies, and that they perceived the advantage his cause would gain thereby, certifies us that it had occurred to him also. For he was a tactician of the first order. He who exhorted his followers to be "wise as serpents" was not deficient in that wisdom himself. His career throughout impresses one as that of a master of strategy.

He himself uses an expression at this time that suggests the presence in his thought of some such plan as a world tour. He was waited upon by a delegation of Jews from the Greek isles and mainland. They had heard of him. Now they sought him out. This move on their part was a small thing in itself. But there carried with it a vast significance. If the Jews of the dispersion were really hearing of him and were beginning to manifest an interest in him, it was a sign that the time was ripe for him to reach out into this world field. He therefore makes no attempt to conceal his joy at the event. He breaks out in an exultant exclamation: "The hour is come!"

In going up to the passover, Jesus makes a state entry into the capital city. Upon seeing him thus enter, the people hail him as "the Son of David." It was a title freighted with significance. David had come forth from the common people. Indeed, in his early days he had been a sort of Robin Hood leading a troop of men in the greenwood, outlaws from the then existing

order of society. For we read: "David thereupon departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam; and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men." Matthew's Gospel claims for Jesus a lineal descent from this outlaw fellow. Jesus was fond of referring to himself as David's descendant.

The narative states that, when in Jerusalem, Jesus went into the Temple, and "looked round about upon all things." The parties in control there should not have permitted so close an inspection, and least of all from so detective and penetrating a pair of eyes as were now at gaze. For there were goings on in that Temple enclosure which were not meant for the light of day. One reads of the Roman conquerors that, in their frequent tours through the provinces, they plundered the temples, and acquired great wealth thereby. Associating that word "temple" with a modern church building, the reader is puzzled at the reference. The thing becomes clear, however, when it is explained that in ancient days the temples, besides being places for worship, were also centres of finance. Often it was "high finance." This was particularly true of the Temple in Jerusalem. To be a member of its priestly retinue was to be in a moneyed aristocracy; for the Temple revenues were large and unfailing. Next to the governor, to be a priest was to occupy the most lucrative position. For the priest

had a slice of all that the people produced. Laws regulated to a nicety what and how much should be brought to the Temple as sacrifice. And these "offerings" were enforced.

In early times the priest got his share of the sacrifices in crude fashion. When the meat had been put into the pot to boil, the priest or his servant came with a flesh hook of three teeth and stuck it into the caldron. He took as his share all that the hook brought out. The sons of Eli were severely blamed in that they sought to select their portions more definitely from the raw meat. But the systematizing went forward, nor was the priest's share lessened thereby. All the skins and fleeces of the animals sacrificed belonged to them, and were sold by them to the tanners and weavers of the city. These priest-princes — for it was an hereditary aristocracy, religiously buttressed — also received the first fruits (that is, the first pick) of all produce of the ground, of the orchards, the best of the dough or bread, the firstlings of the herds or flocks, with the first-born of the children. The last named were redeemable by quit-money, fifty shekels a head if a boy, and thirty shekels if a girl. Thus the priest-princes found themselves in possession of raw materials in considerable quantity, so that they mingled largely in the trade of the country. Practically every priest was a trader. Josephus tells us that some priests in his day had "gotten great riches from these tithes." The cupidity of the Sadducean rulers of the Temple was notorious.

Besides being the centre thus of a busy trade, the Temple was also a kind of banking house. Money was

deposited there for safe keeping. Says Josephus, "the wealthy had there built chambers for themselves." This was because of the sanctity of the place, which gave a measure of security. (Security however which, as we have seen, availed not as against the Romans, who prided themselves that they never permitted barriers of sentiment to impede their wishes at any point; Crassus on his march through the East had broken into the Temple here and robbed it.) The high priest and his set loaned money on interest, and were financiers on a large scale.

The ritual laws themselves were framed for the benefit of these Jerusalem traders. Three times a year the people were summoned to the capital for a sacred festival. The statutes encouraged the people to bring cash with them on these trips instead of goods: "Then thou shalt turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt bestow that money for oxen, etc. And the Levite that is within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him." So large by these means had the fortunes of the priest-nobility become, that they invested it in large landed properties outside of Jerusalem—properties which, in addition to their family estates, now swelled with their revenues their already swollen incomes. To assist them in the handling of their business accounts, they had about the Temple a large staff of clerks and officials.

It is not wonderful, therefore, that the "elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes" had fallen in readily with the Roman "System," whereby, in return for the mere loss of popular sovereignty and

national self-respect, this local oligarchy was buttressed by the Roman legions in its comfortable position on the backs of the people. Nowhere more than in Palestine was Rome's empire of intimidation needed by the native aristocracy. The Jewish populace, incurably seditious by nature and by religion, was at this time rising in revolt against their Jerusalem oppressors, and would have unseated them from their fat privileges had it not been for the Roman garrison in Fort Antonia which overlooked the Temple with its frown of military might.

Even with the help of the Romans, the Temple set were with difficulty maintaining themselves against the rising popular storm. For that priest-nobility had of late achieved a further refinement in their system of exploiting the worshippers at the Temple. A statute prescribed that the Temple sacrifices must be with animals ceremonially clean and unblemished. The priests in each case were the sole judges. This put a leverage in their hands which they had not been slow to use. They had established a market inside the Temple inclosure for the sale of sheep and oxen for sacrifice. A lowly worshipper, poor but with devotion still aflame within him, would come up to the capital at the festival season, and would buy an animal for sacrifice in the public markets of the city where, because of the healthy competition, prices were normal. When he brought this animal to the Temple, however, the priest officials would proceed solemnly to inspect it; and then, with sorrowful countenance, would announce to the trembling worshipper that, however sound it might appear to the unpractised eye, the animal was ceremonially unsound.

Thereupon the man was compelled to buy an animal of one of the traders in the Temple. This trader exacted a "ceremonially" advanced price, because the Temple walls shut out competition from the outside; and the trader and the priest would divide the profits. We can well believe that the price of stalls in this Temple bazaar had been splendidly advanced by the monopoly privileges thus conferred. Moreover the Temple tax was payable in the Temple currency only, by reason of that old statute of Israel which declared that no coin bearing the image of an earthly emperor could be recognized as legitimate. This provided work for another class of traders, the "money-changers," whereby a further extortion was practised upon the poor.

The Carpenter "looked round about" on these doings. As a matter of fact he needed not a personal tour to inform him of the abuses. The air was vocal with complaints. In the pilgrim groups that journeyed up to Jerusalem at the time of a feast — they travelled in bands, the people from each district organizing a united pilgrimage — one of the favourite topics of conversation was this system of extortion under which the people suffered at the hands of the official Jerusalemite set. The people turned their thoughts longingly to the patriarchal simplicity of early days, when the nation had been one family—as in the insurrection under Wat Tyler, when the slogan was: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" Now thousands of their countrymen were toiling on the mountains of Lebanon, in the glens and caves of

Judah, in the mines of the Sinai range, and in a hundred galleys of the sea, in order that a few princely and traitorous families in Jerusalem might live in sumptuous ease; Herod gorging himself with infamy in his palace in Jericho, and the Roman invader sucking millions in revenue out of the country to support obscene orgies on the banks of the Tiber. The rage of the people went out principally against the priest class: "They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men; they make broad the phylacteries of their garments and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats at synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

To the guilt of extortion the priests had added the — to the people — even greater guilt of treason: They were in league with the invader. The first procurator appointed by Tiberius had changed the occupancy of the high priesthood four times, until he had found in Caiaphas a crafty and submissive instrument of Roman tyranny. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. The "house of Annas" was notorious for its greed. Annas himself had large influence with the Romans, due to his open partisanship of them, and to his enormous wealth. His "house" is charged specifically with the crime of "whispering" — private influence on the judges. His revenues from the Temple booths — "the booths of the sons of Annas" — were enormous. This high priestly family is described as "bold, licentious, unscrupulous,

degenerate." There was something rotten in the state. The people poured their woes plentifully into the ear of their Carpenter tribune while they journeyed up together to this feast of the passover. Those woes awoke in him an explosion of wrath against the Jerusalem set.

The outburst took place one day while he was in the Temple. What the people had been telling him was confirmed now by what his eyes witnessed. It incensed him to one of those fine flashes of indignation which stand out so vividly in his career. Jesus had a splendid capacity for losing his temper. Seizing several of the thongs by which animals had been tied and which were scattered about on the flagging, he twisted them into a lash and with it he scourged an entire section of the Temple merchandisers out of the court and onto the street: "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." It has excited comment in modern readers, that he was able to accomplish this cleansing of the Temple single-handed. The explanation is that he was not single-handed. The city and the Temple inclosure were at that moment thronged with worshippers who were ruminating countless wrongs received at the hands of those priest-traders. In this deed, therefore, he had the active sympathy of a host of huzzahing men. It was probably the most popular move Jesus had ever made. He was now the hero of the city.

The extent of the popular following which Israel gave to Jesus has been unfairly covered up and forgotten. The traditional lives of him have been written largely under the spell of Paul of Tarsus, whose desertion of

the Jewish faith in order that he might curry favour with the Romans made it needful for him, in the midst of the attacks upon him from his enraged fellow Israelites, to picture Jesus as having also suffered at the hands of the Jews. Paul was sincere, according to his lights. He spun a theory of Jesus and of christianity largely out of his own brain, and regarded it as heaven-sent. We, however, have an advantage that Paul lacked. The gospel narratives were not written until after his time, or, at least, not until after the biggest part of his literary output had been completed, and his doctrinal ideas had formed and become set. We therefore have documentary evidence as to The Carpenter, where Paul had only hearsay; and the documentary evidence disproves in toto the theory that Jesus was rejected by his nation. The glad acclaim with which the common people greeted him and saw in him their deliverer, protrudes from every page of the record. The fires of the conflagration that were to break out in revolution a few years later, were already kindled in the hearts of the multitude. The gospel narrative heaves and tosses on a thin crust separating from the volcanic heats underneath. Take away those interior fires, the story is unintelligible. Not a public utterance of The Carpenter but had reference, direct or indirect, to the insurgency that was a-boil in the hearts of the people. He was never at pains to seek popularity; it was thrust upon him. His effort was to curb that popularity rather than to incite it. Until he appeared, the people were "as sheep not having a shepherd." Now that they had obtained a shepherd, they rallied to him with an embarrassing wealth of loyalty.

That the Jews refused to receive Jesus, is one of the cruelest libels ever visited on a people. References to the enthusiasm which they lavished upon him are frequent. We read that "they thronged him"; "all the city was gathered together at the door"; "they came from every quarter"; he "could not so much as eat bread"; "the people all hung upon him, listening"; "they said unto him, All men seek for thee." As a background to the story throughout, stand "the multitudes." Erase them, the narrative is meaningless.

And this popularity followed him in Jerusalem during this last week — it was to prove his death week. In order to draw attention to his message, he had made his entry into Jerusalem dramatic by means of a stately procession; and "a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way." We read, "all the people were very attentive to hear him." His cleansing of the Temple, driving out thence the federated and officially entrenched thieves who had been for long preying on the people, was an immediately popular act: "Then assembled together the chief priests and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people." Again: "Early in the morning he came into the Temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down and taught them." Again: "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." The fact that there was a crowd of court

hangers-on who shouted for his death when he was brought before Pilate, brings no weight of contrary evidence. In every city is a rabble that can be suborned for any purpose whatsoever; and we are told that this particular group — an early-morning gang — had been expressly coached by the Caiaphas coterie as to what they should say. So greatly was Jesus the popular hero that when he wished an animal to ride upon for his state entry into Jerusalem, or a room in which to celebrate the passover feast, he is represented as merely sending a request for the same and taking it as if granted; and in both cases the confidence was not disappointed. We can well believe of the opposition, therefore, that "when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude."

The Carpenter now was safe so long as he was in the presence of the people. His bearing at this time evidences his perfect assurance of safety, provided they were around. For we read that "he taught daily in the temple." He was at home in the restaurants and wine-shops of Jerusalem, and by his winsome camaraderie made friends among the common people everywhere. The philippic he delivered at this time against the Jerusalem oligarchy would not have been possible in one who had not the backing of the populace. For that invective is in words which sting like whip-lashes. As a piece of concentrated verbal damnation, it stands probably without a peer. The hot metaphors race upon the heels of one another, surging from out of an oceanic wrath and speeded by a poet's command of epithet: "Woe unto you!" "Ye devour widows' houses; ye

shall receive the greater damnation." "Child of hell!" "Ye blind guides." "Ye fools, and blind." "Hypocrites!" "Ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." "Full of extortion and excess." "Whited sepulchres full of dead men's bones!" "Serpents!" "Generation of vipers!" "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Of similar strain was the parable of the vineyard keepers — those rulers of Israel who forgot that their position at the head of the nation was a stewardship, a trust to be used for the people, and who exploited that trust for their own enrichment! "And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them."

His purging of the Temple — that capitol building of the Jewish nation, the centre of its civic life — and his invective against the traitorous Jerusalem set, had now introduced the Nazarene to the thousands of Jews from abroad who were in the city for the festal season. The Jews of the dispersion were fanatical in their attachment to Israel and to her tradition of the rights of man: so much so that their presence in the capital at feast time was always the signal for extraordinary precautions on the part of the rulers against outbreak. Pilate's official seat was at Cæsarea, but he changed his residence to Jerusalem during each passover season, to preserve order. Quite as much as any other section of their race, these Jews from abroad were turbulent in their protests against the presence of the Romans in Israel's capital, and against the traitorous Jewish oligarchy for coalescing with those Romans. In quelling an insurrection at the

passover season a few years before this, Archilaus the Herodian king had slaughtered three thousand of these Jewish pilgrims. Moreover because of Rome's mounting jealousy of Jerusalem — the latter disputed with Rome the honour of being the world capital — the empire was putting ever increasing dangers in the way of the Jews of the dispersion to revisit their holy city. These pilgrims, therefore, hailed with joy this popular hero from Galilee who was announcing the advent of a new order of society: "The Pharisees said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold the world is gone after him." The Jews of the diaspora would go back to their homes when the passover should be ended; back to the valley of the Euphrates, to the Greek islands in the Ægean, to the ports of the Mediterranean from the Pillars of Hercules to the Caspian Sea; and there they would tell how a leader, a redeemer of the working class, had at last appeared; and they would prepare an entry for him into their countries, when he should reach them on his tour among the nations.

It would almost seem as if the fear of some such a tour on his part, as soon as the passover should be ended, prompted the Temple clique to action; for it was when he was eating the paschal supper that they came down upon him. A few hours more, and there would be nothing to keep him in the city, for the passover would be closed and he would be free to follow up among the nations the success which his daring in the presence of representatives from all the world had in the last few days achieved for him.

CHAPTER X

ASSASSINATION

A COMPLIMENT is due the Caiaphas crowd for the shrewdness which they displayed in effecting the capture of The Carpenter. Jesus, when the people were present, was safe. In the daytime, therefore, he walked openly: "Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him." The night was the time of danger, for then the people were asleep. It seems that Jesus accordingly concealed his whereabouts carefully after sundown. He did not trust himself in the city then, but went outside the walls to a camp in the fields. He also took the additional precaution of arming two of his disciples with swords. He seems effectually to have hidden his place of nightly sojourn, because we find that the authorities were baffled. The bribe to Judas would not have been negotiated had they not needed some one on the inside to guide them in a night attack. In keeping his whereabouts a secret, Jesus seems furthermore to have had the active coöperation of the people at large. For the rulers had issued an edict whose purpose was to break up a popular conspiracy of concealment: "Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment that if any

man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him."

The night of the paschal supper presented to Caiaphas and his party the opportunity they sought. The Carpenter realized the danger; nevertheless he did not permit it to take him out of the city on this night when the passover was to be celebrated. Another name for the supper was, The Feast of Unleavened Bread; because the Israelites in their haste to escape from the brickyards of Egypt had not had time to set bread for the journey and allow it to raise. An upper room was chosen by Jesus, perhaps for the reason that it could be more easily defended in case of attack. The venom of the privileged caste against him has now reached a point where his chances of life are slim. And he purposes, if this shall be the last passover he can eat with his disciples, to make it a memorable occasion. It was customary at this feast for the youngest present to ask: "Why is this night different from all other nights? what mean ye by this service?" Whereupon the head of the family or of the company would reply by a recapitulation of the history of the escape out of Egypt. Jesus seizes upon this custom to connect forever after his own movement for the liberation of the people, with this supper. With characteristic brazenness the Jerusalem set had wrested the paschal feast from its original significance; they were proclaiming themselves to be the successors of Moses. Jesus pointed out the ludicrousness of this position: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat." The priest-mind was keen to garnish the tombs of the prophets — those revolutionists who were dead and therefore safe — but they had no ears for this plebeian

and dangerous fellow from Nazareth. They embalmed Moses, the labour-leader of the past, into the orthodoxy of the present. As is done in every age; your true conservative is he who worships a dead radical. Jesus now purposes that this indecency shall be permitted no longer: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you." And he proceeds to point out the parallel between that ancient deliverance under Moses, and the one to which he himself is summoning the people. He bids them, should he be killed, to celebrate him also in this feast for all time thereafter. The wine and the unleavened bread, which memorialized Israel's escape from the slave pens of Goshen, were to be symbols also of this new restoration unto which he was summoning them. "Do this, as oft as ye shall eat it, in remembrance of me."

The Caiaphas set had already begun to tamper with the disciple band, by holding out bribes of money. Hints to this effect had reached Jesus, perhaps through some member of the upper class; for patriotism still lived in the breasts of some of the Jewish nobles. The glitter of Roman gold and Roman pomp could not dazzle from their vision all remembrance of Israel's tradition of democracy. So that, "among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." Nicodemus was one of these. Another was Joseph of Arimathea, "a good man and a just."

Wherever the leak, Jesus got the information. At the supper he refers to it. Some one of the disciple band, says he, has been listening too willingly to the clink of

money in the palms of the enemy. There is an interpolated statement here that Jesus pointed Judas out as the one. This is in line with the motive which is especially conspicuous in the Fourth Gospel. Its writer thinks of the death of Jesus as a theatrical event, planned and rehearsed long before. To him the scene on Calvary is a dramatic performance to which the actor went with his stage manners on, knowing beforehand just how it was going to happen and chiefly concerned with acting his part impressively. The high irreverence of such a view seems not to have struck the writer. If there is one characteristic in The Carpenter more outstanding than another, it is his genuineness. Cant and affectation of any kind were to him a thing detestable. There was in his make-up a refreshing absence of staginess. A man brought up among the working class, and trained through the greatest part of his life as a mechanic, does not attitudinize, either before his companions or for posterity. He has a work to do and he does it, and he subordinates all things else to its accomplishment.

The impossibility of treating so genuine a man as this from the view-point of a poser, is seen in the contradictions that arise when these artificial motives are interpolated into the record. After stating that Jesus had pointed out Judas as his betrayer and had bade him go and consummate the villainy, the record adds: "No man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of." But the greatest contradiction of all is that which pictures the death of Jesus as a suicide, a sublime one to

be sure, but suicide nevertheless. There are situations in which it is easier to die than to live; the brave choice is to keep on living. If Jesus had brought his cause to a point where the pressure began to be felt, and then voluntarily left that little band to bear the brunt alone, it would not be reckoned in him for heroism. But such a supposition is not necessary from the records taken as a whole. The Carpenter wished to live. He fought against death to the last.

Judas was the only disciple who was not a Galilean. It is more than likely that the other eleven had now and then taken advantage of this fact, making him understand that they were nearer to their Nazarene leader than he could ever hope to be. Perhaps it was because of this lonesome position of Judas that Jesus had selected him out to be the treasurer and therefore the business agent for the disciple band. But this had not altogether succeeded. Galileans, in the intensity of their patriotism and their working-class consciousness, were marked off so sharply from the other sections in Palestine that there was a solidarity among them. And Judas was still isolated. Apparently the astute clique of chief rulers, perceiving probably from his accent that Judas was the only non-Galilean among them, focussed their temptations upon him. It seems that he had thus far listened to them only tentatively and had not as yet come to the yielding point. Now, however, hearing the enigmatical statement of Jesus to the effect that one of the disciple band was listening to treasonable proposals, he is self-accused by a conscience natively tender and quick; he infers that his coquetting with the rulers is discovered, that it is all

up with him henceforward with the disciples. In the confusion of his spirit, he impulsively decides to take the step. Making some excuse or other to the company about buying provisions for the morrow, and having learned where they intend to go after the supper, he leaves them, presents himself to the chief priests, and accepts the bribe offer. "And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude."

Judas was not altogether bad. The fact that The Carpenter, who was highly clairvoyant in reading character, chose him out from the large number of his followers to be one of the twelve — the inner group — speaks much. The fact that out of this twelve he was picked for the trusted position of treasurer, speaks still more. Further still, the fact that his own conscience, immediately after the traitorous deed, accused him with an utter abandon of remorse, speaks most of all. In less than twelve hours after he had done the deed, he comes to himself. Thereupon, man-fashion, he seeks to make amend in every way possible — he puts forth an utter effort to save his master. He goes to the chief priests as Jesus is about to be sentenced, and recants his recantation. It is a perilous step for him personally. Nevertheless he takes it and without flinching. He stands boldly before the tyrannical chief magistrates and pleads the cause of his aforetime lord. It is one of the most courageous acts recorded between the covers of the Bible. For this was during a reign of terrorism, when even members of the ruling class such as Nicodemus visited the Galilean by night, if they visited him at all. Free speech was not tolerated.

A military dictatorship, under the control largely of an irresponsible and venomous hierarchy, was upon the city. Judas takes his life in his hands when he thus openly identifies himself with the hated Nazarene, and champions his cause. But the recantation avails not. Judas is laughed at for his pains. Thereupon he refuses to profit by the proceeds of his deed. He throws the thirty pieces of silver at their feet, and makes the one last restitution: he "departed, and went and hanged himself."

Judas is an illustration of the irresistible charm which the personality of The Carpenter exercised upon those who came within its magnetism. No play actor strutting through a carefully rehearsed part could have laid so magical a spell upon the hearts of men. His personal appearance and make-up are not described. Herein his portrayers show highest art, for the best literary portrait is that in which the words and deeds of the man do the describing. Reading thus between the lines, we see in the Workingman of Nazareth a titanic intellect coupled up with a heart rarely combining strength with kindliness; one who was genuinely a friend of the toilers, loving them with a great love and hating their oppressors with a great hate, and thereby weaving a spell over his followers which no offer of gold or place or power from the enemy could avail to break; it could alienate not one of them.

Nevertheless, though Judas atoned with an utter atonement, the effects of his deed were swiftly disastrous. Lingering in the upper room over the supper's table-talk, Jesus seems after a while to have become suspicious of the failure of Judas to return. During the last five days he has been constantly beset by danger. The atmosphere

round about him has been tense with spydom and treachery. He has got through the perilous week thus far, and is nearly at its end. It will not do to take chances now. He deems it safer to get outside the city walls. The narrow streets of Jersualem, particularly during the unlamped night, afford too many opportunities to hired bands of assassins operating under cover of midnight brawlers. Therefore he brings the supper to an end, in order to get out into the open country: "Arise, let us go hence." He is prepared to fight his way out if necessary: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough."

It had been his custom to bivouac at night in an olive grove beyond the brook Cedron. Thither he now leads his eleven. They reach there safely. But it is not a time to omit precautions. He leaves his disciples to serve as a lookout: "Tarry ye here, and watch." He himself goes to another part of the garden, perhaps where the ground is higher. The wait is not for long. He discovers that his fears were well-grounded. The lanterns of an armed cohort coming out against him suddenly round into view and cover every avenue of escape — weapons glittering in the light of torches. He is in a trap. Judas has played his part well. The high priests have got from Pilate a detachment of soldiers from Fort Antonia — the Jerusalem fortress named after Mark Antony — and are come against Jesus strongly armed. Escape is cut off. The multitudes, who have been his natural defenders, are far scattered through the city, sleeping off the effects of the feast. Word of his danger cannot reach them in

time. The craft of the rulers has prevailed. The stratagem is complete.

Leaving his disciples, Jesus goes a few paces into the darkness. There he falls upon his face; he cries to heaven in his agony. Just when his cause had commenced to move so auspiciously, with the representatives from the world-wide dispersion rallying to him and with an entering wedge among the Jewish ruling class itself, to be trapped in the dark and slain in this fashion — it broke him down! Not fear for himself caused the agony of that Gethsemane moment. He had been born and bred to a life of hardness. Nerve flabbiness was not in his make-up. No bodily shrinking, or the disgrace of a felon's death, could have wrung from him sweat, "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." His fear was for the stability of his disciples. One of them had already gone over to the enemy. Would it not be thus with them all? "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." (This anxiety for the continued ongoings of the word is revealed in his request a few minutes later — of a shrewdness unsuspected by the enemy, or they would not have granted it—that his captors take only himself and spare his disciples: "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.") He had had many things yet to say unto those disciples, and now he was to be wrested from them. He had only begun to deliver his message in its large unfoldings. Considering how treasured is every slightest word of The Carpenter, his untimely taking off was a loss to the literature of the world. For he was still in his thirties. That oceanic mind had in it deeps of thought as yet un-

plumbed, pearl beds of imagery as yet untapped. He was the livest man that ever lived; and he was never more alive than at this moment wherein his previous successes in Galilee had culminated in far more important successes in Jerusalem itself with the eyes of the world at gaze upon him. A master of situations, a prolific brain, of unwearied intellectual energy, a tireless activity, an elasticity of mind that was adapting itself with ease to the most widely divergent conditions, rich in passion, bending everything to his iron will — these powers were now redoubling beneath the stimulus of success and popularity. That rarest of blends — a man of imagination and action — he was but just at the threshold of his career. Hence the Gethsemane prayer, the strong man crying out against his untimely taking off. That prayer is incontrovertible evidence: the death of Jesus was not a self-murder.

The soldiers close in on him. They greatly outnumber his company. But there is something siderial in the majesty of the man, They fall back. Peter, impetuous as ever, seizes upon this moment of their discomfiture to draw his sword. Apparently there ensues a more or less serious scuffle. A young man of the disciple group, who seems to have been John Mark, got into the thick of it and only escaped by leaving his linen garment in the hands of the soldiers and fleeing naked. He was known afterward by the epithet, "the stump-fingered," and perhaps received the wound in this midnight scrimmage. Turning to the "chief priests and captains of the Temple, and the elders which were come out against him," Jesus taunts them with their cowardice in coming upon him in the night and for not daring an open challenge in the day-

time when the people would be awake and could rally to him: "When I was daily with you in the Temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness." His disciples make their escape, apparently at a quiet suggestion to that effect from Jesus—his resourcefulness not forsaking him even now. He himself is taken into custody.

The Caiaphas band drag him to immediate trial. It is now about midnight. The thing must be despatched before the multitudes wake up the next morning and get wind of the affair; therefore legal forms are dispensed with. The hold of this popular hero on the masses is so great that if his execution is delayed until the populace learn of the move they will rally to his defence and rescue him by force of numbers. "Straightway," therefore, they proceed to convict him before the ecclesiastical tribunal. This accomplished, they bear him before the Roman governor, Pilate. The haste with which they have expedited the matter is indicated in that the cocks do not begin to crow until the trial has well advanced. The charge they bring against him was strangely true: "He stirreth up the people." "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar." And this to Pilate: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." It seems also that, construing some statement of his in reference to the Temple, in accordance with his recent damnatory epithets against the robber gang that had got possession of it, they charge him also with having planned to destroy that building. His infinite contempt for the Herod family was known, a contempt which was not blinded into homage

by Herod the Great's ostentatious gift of this Temple structure out of money pillaged from the people. No smoke without some fire; people could with reason believe that Jesus was going to raze this building to the ground.

It has been imagined by some that Pilate had a spasm of conscientiousness, and was sincerely desirous of saving Jesus from death. But his sincerity will not stand close examination. History has dealt with Pilate's reputation unfavourably; it accuses him of "venality, robbery, persecutions, wanton malicious insults, judicial murders." His financial crimes in Palestine, his cowardice, and his true Roman cynicism toward virtue of any sort, had incapacitated him for a just and straightforward course in any matter. He passed his days and nights amid a horde of intriguers, in a welter of petty greeds, lusts, rivalries, and palace revolutions. Hardly would an archangel have been proof against so corroding an environment. Any one who knows Pontius Pilate, or in fact any other of the Roman governors of a province in those days, will understand that conscience was not a part of their make-up. They were not chosen for the place because of their moral sensitiveness and ethical insight. Their job was that of slave driver over an entire province. Brutality and moral bluntness were the qualities needed. Tenderness of conscience would have operated as a distinct disqualification for the office. Pilate's show of friendliness toward the prisoner in question seems to have been prompted in part by a motive of personal pique. He and Herod had had a falling out. "They were at enmity between themselves," is the way the narrative states it. Pilate

believed that Jesus was raising an insurrection in order to make himself king of Palestine; therefore he seems to have been willing to leave this artisan pretender alive for a while, to serve as a thorn rankling in Herod's thigh.

But Pilate had a still more urgent reason for his show of decency toward Jesus. And this was, fear of his wife. Pilate's wife had had a dream concerning this prisoner. Perhaps she had seen him hauled through the streets that midnight, bound and helpless; and her sympathies, woman-fashion, had been aroused. One of the characteristics of The Carpenter throughout was his influence over women. From the first he attracted their attention and won allegiance from many of them. They, perhaps more than any other class in that day, needed a deliverer. The despotism that was upon the lower orders everywhere, was upon them in redoubled heaviness. They were hardly recognized by law, and had small standing in its tribunals. Forced by the economic distress to go out to day-labour in the fields, they were being bent out of all feminine grace and suppleness. As free women they were not secure from the lust of the Roman invaders, and slavery was for them little else than concubinage. They rallied, therefore, to the movement of liberation set on foot by The Carpenter. Much of the money that financed his career came from them; we read in the crucifixion narrative: "Many women were there, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him."

Pilate's wife is now added to the number of the women who found themselves interested in this leader. Perhaps she had not seen him but had merely heard of him; for the fame of his daring deeds the past week had

spread. We read, after the state entry: "When he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." All circles in Jerusalem were twittering of him.

Anyhow, the dream has made her superstitious. It appears further that she is of a more or less assertative temperament — in fact, that she often governs the governor. For she speaks her mind now to Pilate with immediacy and a measure of emphasis: "His wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man." And Pilate proceeds to obey. Confronted by the Temple set, he tries in squirmy fashion to dodge the issue. At last he finds it easier to kill Jesus than to obey his wife. But he realizes that an uncomfortable half-hour is awaiting him in the house as soon as she gets the news. Hence the theatrical hand-washing. We are unable to detect in that ceremonial any sudden conversion to sentiments of justice and humanity on the part of this cynical Roman, waist-deep in human blood, a liar and a trickster throughout. This hand-washing ritual was itself a lie; for he avowed the while, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Pilate, Pilate! just a few minutes before, you stated to Jesus: "I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee." Not thus, Pilate, will you find answer to that question of yours, "What is truth?"

No. That basin of water washes not the blood of the Galilean from the hands of the Roman Empire, red with world-wide spoliation. It was Rome that put Jesus to

death. The Jewish method of capital punishment was by stoning. The assassination of The Carpenter, a deed that has sent a thrill of horror through the heart of humanity ever since, was perpetrated by Rome and by a handful of Romanized renegades among the Jewish privileged class. The hand-washing scene was but Pilate's spectacular — and one likes to believe ineffectual — attempt to restore peace in his family.

On the way from the Prætorian to the place of crucifixion at the gates of the city, Jesus was unable to sustain the weight of the cross. He does not seem to have been of rugged physical proportions. True, in the present case he had been weakened by the sleepless night through which he had just passed and by the scourgings. Nevertheless a man of robust frame could have withstood that ordeal and still have endured the load as far as the city gates: for prisoners were not required to carry the entire cross, but only the transverse piece, the upright being already in the ground. A further fact indicative of a not stalwart strength is that he died so soon. It was not unusual for victims to hang on the nails for days, until they died of starvation or were torn to death by wild beasts. Jesus died in a few hours. The home of penury in which he had been born, with its wearing toil begun too early, its limited and uncertain food supplies, and the harassments to which a fine-grained workingman was submitted by the absolutism which was upon the people, conspired not to the making of a sleek and happy animal. The Carpenter did not make his impress upon history through any advantages of physique, but through a master intellect, coupled with a master heart and will. In

this connection we think also of Julius Cæsar, that tall, slim form, his high-pitched voice rising into shrillness in public speech; not marked for robustious health; fighting fever; prematurely bald; overtaken in middle life with nerve breakdown. And we are reminded anew that one need not be a great animal before one can do a great work.

There was a ghastly fittingness in the mode of death which was meted out to Jesus. Crucifixion was characteristically Roman. It was the method by which those lords of the earth put their slaves to death. So common was it becoming, because of the rapid increase in the number of slaves and because of the waxing severity of their treatment, that the cross may almost be said to have been the badge of the Roman Empire — the sign and symbol of the slavery by means of which and for the perpetuation of which that empire existed. When the slave insurrection under Spartacus was finally quelled, six thousand crosses along the road sides, with a slave spiked to each, was Rome's way of memorializing her victory. For workmen to join an insurrection, meant always a risk of crucifixion. Jesus with entire candour pointed this out to those who thought to enlist under him. He demanded of every recruit a willingness to be crucified: "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross."

Attached to the slave stable on every private estate was a cross or two, as part of the regular equipment of the tool shed. It was natural that the slave master should have chosen this method of execution. Because in it the victim's cup of degradation was filled full.

Humiliation is the principle on which slave masters operate everywhere; and particularly was this true in the Roman Empire where the slaves were of the same colour as the masters, often knew more than those masters, and therefore must needs be cowed to an utter degree. As anything that aroused self-esteem in the slave was in highest measure dangerous to the master; so, contrariwise, anything that degraded the slave was serviceable. For the idea underlying the Roman system was that only the owner was a man; his slaves were "articulate instruments," quite sub-human. It was important, therefore, that a consciousness of his sub-human state should be dinned into the slave night and day. For until the last spark of self-reverence had been quenched within him, he would cause his owner nightmare fears of insurrection.

Hence the use of the cross, because it was found an excellently dehumanizing instrument. It combined in rare degree most of the elements of human debasement. The victim's body was exposed. He was lifted up into public gaze. His hands nailed outstretched and with spikes through his feet also, he was an emblem of the helplessness which the owner constantly sought to press home on his slaves. Best of all, the spectacle often lasted through several days, and thus would impress its teaching on a considerable number of passers-by; for a public place was ordinarily chosen for the crucifixion, such as the gate of a city or a much-travelled road side, in order that the masses might be impressed by the object lesson and be duly intimidated. So valuable indeed was this intimidation that an owner could afford to crucify a slave now and then, for no other purpose than to keep

the rest of his "agricultural implements" in a proper state of terrorism. In Roman chronicles we read of slaves being crucified for minor offences, such as the accidental breaking of a dish, and we exclaim against the owner's short-sightedness in permitting passion to cause him the loss of valuable human property. But it was not so short-sighted as it might seem. A crucifixion every so often was good policy on the part of a large slave owner, for it supplied the element of intimidation which was essential to an industrialism based on slavery, and the expense of which intimidation was figured in as a fixed item in the cost.

To an industrialism based thus on human degradation, The Carpenter with his teachment of self-respect had been a fatal enemy. He was indeed "perverting the nation" against the Romans and the system for which the Romans stood. His inoculation of the working class with the germs of inalienable divinity was making it highly inconvenient for the Romans and their minions in the Jerusalemite set to use the common people for revenue only. Therefore as a means of preventing any further spread of the poison and of neutralizing the amount of it that he had injected into the people's veins, his death by crucifixion. He had spoken of himself as an impersonation of the proletariat. Therefore in his degradation by means of the cross, that proletariat could see themselves degraded and reduced to their proper sphere once more.

To this indictment of the privileged class of that day one or two exemptions must be made. We have seen that in some of the "elders," patriotism and the idea of

human rights had not entirely decayed. Chief among these was Joseph of Arimathea. A man of wealth, he had divested himself of the prejudices of his set. Furthermore he had courage in rare degree, for we read that he was "a counsellor; and the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them." Though profiting personally by the Roman occupancy of Palestine, since it made his own revenues more secure, he refused to be warped thereby from straight thinking. We read of him that he "also himself waited for the kingdom of God." That kingdom, as we have seen, meant the universal reign of justice, and carried with it as one of its primary implications the off-throw of Roman rule and the return of sovereignty to the people. Thus though a man of riches he was also a man of ideals — he was "rich toward God." He had kept his money in its proper place as "means," not an end in itself. Therefore he had not lost self-respect; he had kept his property the junior member of the firm, with himself as the senior and dominating partner.

This Joseph, by his inheritance and training as a member of the ruling oligarchy, would naturally have tended toward conservatism. It is noteworthy, therefore, that he boldly aligned himself with the Insurgent from Galilee. This was due not to a forsaking of those conservative ideals, but to a deeper insight as to the route by which those ideals were to be attained. He glimpsed in the Galilean a conservatism by the side of which the temporizing and terrorizing tactics of his associates were sheer anarchy. With civilizations as with snakes, those that cannot shed their skins die. Jesus announced

at the start-off, "I have not come to destroy." He thought of his work throughout as that of a constructionist. Society's safety was his aim. To this end his name, "Preserver," had been given him by his mother: "Thou shalt call his name 'Jesus'; for he shall 'save' his people." His vehemency against the exploiter class was because he perceived them to be destructionists. A civilization founded upon property rights is built upon the sands, and will not stand the backwash when the rains set in. This counsellor Joseph believed that Jesus was right, and that only a civilization founded upon human rights, with property as a subordinate, an underling, can permanently endure. Therefore he was willing to give The Carpenter a chance to make alterations in the edifice, in order to give it a rock foundation. To be sure, alterations in the house one is living in is a time of tribulation. But he believed it better to suffer the temporary annoyance than to live in a building whose foundations were crumbling day by day.

Men of means who throw themselves like this Arimathean into movements of social renovation, declass themselves and are cast out by their set as traitors. But their justification does not tarry. A few years after this, and Joseph the Counsellor was able to point his short-sighted associates to Jerusalem in ruins, Palestine devastated, and the people — a hundred thousand of them — deported into slavery; and he could remind them of the words the slaughtered Carpenter had used, who "beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days

shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

CHAPTER XI

BAD FRIDAY

THE murder of Jesus was the greatest crime in history. It removed the one person who was able to awaken the proletariat of the ancient world, and to guide it after being awakened. As it was, that proletariat, left leaderless, either lashed itself into a frenzied and suicidal fury, as in the Jewish War of Liberation three decades later; or else — and this was the fate of the masses in most of the countries — it despaired of any rescue from the hand of the oppressor, and slumped into the animalism that ever accompanies despair. No authentic monument marks the skull-shaped knob of ground outside Jerusalem where the murder was committed. But it needs no monument. The Orient as it is to-day, and as it threatens to remain for millenniums yet to come, is a tombstone sufficiently dismal, recording the event.

A ship master on the Ægean about this time heard a cry from one of the coasts as he sailed by: "Pan is dead!" It was the death cry of the ancient world — of its joy, its genius, its aspirations, the music of its laughter; zest and gladness gone. The modern mind has become wonted to the notion of the Orient as an inclement and wilderness spot on the face of nature. The unclad hills, the dry valleys becoming torrential in the rainy season, the

impoverished soil, a shiftlessness and despair upon the people, mark a region that seems to have been cursed from the beginning — a land never meant for habitation. But that country was not ever thus. As Polonius would say, "this effect defective comes by cause." Time was when those eastern coasts of the Mediterranean knew joy and fertility. The present devastations were once thickly peopled; the population now is but a fourth part of what it was before the Romans came. There were great cedars on Lebanon and fir trees along the slopes of Gilead. Normally the flora of Palestine is of surpassing wealth, including three thousand species, from the Alpine heights of Carmel to the tropical heats of the Jordan Valley. In the time of which we speak, that flora was in evidence. There were roses in Sharon, and the lily in a thousand valleys. Music was heard on the terraced hills at night, when the keepers of the vineyards were resting. The oak trees of Bashan sheltered flocks. The apple, the pomegranate, vines with tender grapes, the mandrake, and all manner of pleasant fruits gave forth odour from the sun-filled valley. The roe and the young hart leaped on the mountains of Bether. Copious was the outflow from the horn of plenty. Galilee's lake teemed with fish, and the curing of it was a prosperous industry on its southern shore. There was life, life in full measure, life heaped up, pressed together, running over.

Genius was awake. With a lyric grace, psalms sung themselves spontaneously from out the life of the people, so that the world has been resinging them ever since. Seers in the valley of vision peered deep into the soul of things, and their peerings have sustained the

heart of man from that day to this. The Ægean was dotted with sails. On many an isle of Greece, burning Sapphos loved and sang. Pan with his shepherd's flute made the groves merry with melody; white-robed maidens framed processionals to the temple; and all the people joined in the chorals. Religion was joy.

It was a time of the flourishing of the arts. Freedom was in the air; therefore a creative spirit kindled in the heart. The vases, pots, and hangings which we guard to-day in museums, were the household crockery and articles of common use in this former age, before slavery's cramping grip had made man's right hand forget its cunning. The East was the home of elegance and the arts of life. Worm-eaten carvings, pieces of rough pottery, scraps of figured cloth, which to-day we look at in glass cases, are the wreckage from the ordinary industrialism of that time. The beauty of which these are fragments surrounded then the whole of life. Not without cause has been the nostalgia of man's spirit ever since for its homeland under Eastern skies. That East was the seat of a rich and advanced civilization. They had industrial processes which are the despair of artisans to-day. Damascus blades of raw steel brought from India were of wondrous hues and beauty. They were tempered so that one could double and redouble them, after which they would spring back to a straight line. Several of the finest dyes and pigments ever possessed by the world are now lost. There is even a hint that they possessed the secret of malleable glass, so that a goblet which was dented by a fall to the floor was straightened back with a hammer. There were mosaic workers, sculptors, en-

gravers of gems, workers of artistic pottery and metal. The noise of the loom was heard, the caldron of the dyers boiled merrily. Handicraftsmen wove their vision of the world into their art products — rich hangings, cups of onyx and myrrh, preciously wrought vases. It was the age of the arts and crafts.

Oppression arose, seeking to use people as tools and not as an end in themselves. Whereupon the gladness took fright; creative art caught chill and sickened. For art is the expression of a man's joy in his work. Slave labour never yet produced art, and never will. The people rallied against these native despotisms and were in a fair way to regain the ancient freedom. Then Rome came, Rome the blighter. Rome tied together the local oppressions into a world-wide cohesion, and unitedly they intimidated the earth. Thereupon there was no more spirit in the people. They became afraid for the terror that flew by day, and which like a pestilence walked upon them in darkness. The destruction wasted them at noonday; for a thousand fell before the invader, and ten thousand at his right hand. The rule of the few, by the few, and for the few, took the place of joy and privilege for the many. Therefore that cry, "Pan is dead." Pan represented liberty and joy, and the arts which spring from liberty and joy. With its passing passed beauty also; for art and despotism are contradictories. Under the rule of the unimaginative Roman, joy and its attendant creativeness were starved out of the subjugated many, and fattened out of the too favoured few. There settled down upon the Orient a sense of the bankruptcy of life, the breakdown of ideals.

Now, two thousand years after, the desolation is still unlifted.

The Carpenter of Nazareth saw in his day the fateful tendencies coming to a head, and he set himself against them. He was the spirit of the East, the spirit of freedom, the spirit of fellowship, lifting its cry against the hard materiality that with crushing military might was advancing from out the West. He stood for industrial liberation, because he was a hand worker and a lover of beauty. Economic facts have a way of translating themselves into moral and artistic magnitudes. Jesus was supremely the artist nature. Not merely that he had a poet's command over the resources of language, and a rarely rhythmic utterance. His whole temper was set to beauty. Rich blooded, an incomparable wealth of emotion, alive in every pore, with a sure dexterity and a joyous reaction to the thousand stimuli of sense, his was the most truly artist nature the Jewish race has produced. He was the flowering of the genius of the teeming, the creative East. His stories, the casual inventions of the moment, furnish by-words to the literature of all time — in every touch the magic of the artist. This poet and handicraftsman of Nazareth set himself against Rome's industrialism based on slavery, because he knew that only in freedom can worth-while work be wrought and worth-while lives be lived. But Rome triumphed. With the East, beauty perished from the earth. Golgotha set back the clock of time an incalculable distance. Only mounds now to tell where cities sank and died away. The traveller to-day passes over stretches of gray desert. The sites of unremembered cities are now dunes — drifting sand.

There is something in the Golgotha scene, however, which bereaves it of its palsying power. And this was the determination, the unsurrendered will of the Leader even as he hung, dying. The liberation movement is to his thought elemental, invincible; so that it imparts something of its own immortality to whoso identify themselves with it. He sees it with prophetic eye as it rounds and swells into the future, a very river of life across the centuries, and bearing on its ample bosom all who entrust themselves unto it. Never for a moment does Jesus think of himself as passing out of existence. He and his Cause are one, and both are indestructible. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," is his word at this time to his disciples. And he even goes into some detail in instructing them what to do when they shall have recovered from the shock of his execution as a slave. He tells them to go back to Galilee for a sojourn, as that is a friendlier sky under which they may recruit their zeal; he is fearful of the effect upon them of a too long stay in capitalistic Jerusalem.

The abandon with which, even in the moments of dying, he loses himself in thoughtfulness for the Cause, is without parallel in the annals of heroism. While he was being dragged through the streets, "there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him." But self-pity was not in his make-up. His thoughts are not on what is being done to him, but on the mischief that is being done thereby to the people: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days are coming in the which they shall say,

'Blessed are the barren and the wombs which never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.'" And he takes this occasion to remind them that the empire, that systematic assault on the liberties of the people, is as yet only in its beginning. Like a piece of wood not yet seasoned, what will be its doings when it shall have come to its perfect work: "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

Upon the cross he is not permitted to forget the Roman Empire — the unshamed and organized plunder for which it stands. One of the sights which greet his eyes, before the blur and the mist set in, is a group of Roman soldiers stealing his clothes. Matthew naïvely states that they did this in order to fulfil scripture — "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." But the facts seem to be that they saw here a chance to annex some property without working for it, and the helplessness of the owner at that particular moment so far from deterring them was but an added reason why the annexing should take place. Rome plays her part to the last.

And so does Jesus. It was a merciful custom among the Jews during a crucifixion to give to the victim a potion of medicated wine to deaden his sensibilities. The draught was provided by a society of charitable women in Jerusalem. In the present instance this drink was refused — Jesus had work to do. We read: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother." The son proceeds to make arrangement for her future abode, an arrangement which

is to have a bearing on the progress of the Cause a few years from that date.

It may surprise some readers to discover his mother present and enduring with something of stoutness the Golgotha scene. Mothers, particularly when their offspring are concerned, are commonly supposed to be swayed by emotion and the maternal instinct. Here, however, we find his mother not only present, but closely present. For the narrative specifies that she was standing, "by the cross of Jesus," as opposed to the other two crosses in the immediate vicinity. It appears that Mary's set will and firmness of purpose, with an account of which our narrative opened, are nothing daunted by the event she now is witnessing. From the point of view of neighbours back in Nazareth, a scandal is overtaking the family. For the humiliation of a death by crucifixion is aggravated in this case by the association with two thieves. Mary, however, is uncowed, unterrified, unabashed. She takes a stand by the side of the cross, willingly participating in any obloquy that may attach to that position. From that post we behold her looking the world calmly in the face.

The physical sufferings which her son was enduring were not then what they would be to-day, reared as moderns are in the school of softness. The long reign of brutality was blunting the nerve terminals. The life of the poor in that age was one long crucifixion. Hardness their daily lot. Not only was their suffering an incident of the industrial system of the day. It was a part of the fundamental policy of that system, as tending to keep the masses down where they belonged. Rome's

empire, based as it was on terrorism, officially favoured the governor who repressed the people most effectually. They were sheep at the mercy of ravening wolves. The basic principle of the empire was that part of the people are eaters of the other part by divine right. Born in a public stable, brought up in a hut, eating porridge from a common pot in the midst of the family circle (not always sure even of porridge), sleeping at night on a mat taken from a shelf by the wall and laid on the dirt floor, going out day by day to sell his labour under conditions galling to a high-spirited workman — neither a man brought up thus, nor his mother, would be tenderlings. They had become accustomed to the sight of blood. Moreover, the member of the family now picked for slaughter was in some respects better off than those left behind. For slavery was creeping upon the population so rapidly, that a fate worse than death was perhaps in store for the living.

Another disciple is standing by — John. Jesus nods toward him with his head — his hands are spiked to the beam — and says to his mother, "woman, behold thy son," the term "woman" being the translation of a word of kindly and customary address. And, bowing to the other, "behold thy mother." The narrative states that, "from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." We are compelled to infer that Jesus had a purpose in bringing these two together. The move could hardly have been prompted by distrust of his brothers, of either their willingness or ability to provide a home for their mother. That were a reflection upon those brothers which is not justified by the data

that has come down to us. For in the opening scene in The Acts, we find the brothers of Jesus with the disciple band. The move seems rather to have been an adoption of John into the family in order to confirm him in the cause of insurgency. Until then, John has not stood forth as an irreconcilable. He had been on good terms — perilously good terms — with the Caiaphas crowd. When Jesus was captured in the olive grove and taken before the council, John's influence at court gave him an entrée thither. For we read: "That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest." Add to this personal connection with the aristocracy, a temperament natively amiable, and we have all the factors for another apostasy, once the magnetism of the master's presence is removed. But with Mary as his adopted mother, the danger disappears. No more seeking of favour at the hands of those in charge of the Caiaphas palace. The established class, which is "gorgeously apparelled and lives delicately," invades the stoutest hearts. But it will no longer invade John's heart. An uncompromiser is to be close to him from now on. We have seen Mary's hand in the shaping of three other out-and-outers. To those three is now to be added a fourth. How she discharged the obligation here laid upon her, we shall see later.

And so Jesus, "knowing that all things were now accomplished," a builder and a constructionist to the end, yielded up the ghost.

The effect of this immortal projection of himself into his Cause was not long in showing itself. The immediate result upon his disciples of this crucifixion of their

master was numbness. They were utterly dispirited: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." But the numbness disappears. A return to life and hope takes place. Before long, as though urged by an unseen Leader, the march that had come so suddenly to a stop sets in again with the tread of a conqueror. Concert now takes the place of that disorganized condition. They secure a headquarters in Jerusalem itself. There they assemble themselves. Among them in these gatherings was "Mary the mother of Jesus." Once again we are reminded of Cornelia, mother of the Grachii, who, after beholding her two sons killed for advocating the rights of the people, continues to carry on the work; Cornelia, summoning men of affairs to her villa near Misenum incites them to insurrection and sends them forth in the cause to which her sons had paid the last full measure of devotion. The picture of Mary of Nazareth meeting with the disciple band after the death of her son, continuing his work undauntedly, gives her preëminent place in the not inconsiderable gallery of the heroines of history.

A stir of life is noticeable among these disciples. Instead of previous despair we see hope, mounting at times into ecstasy. A very fanaticism of courage has come upon them. When the rulers and elders and scribes "saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they took knowledge of them. So they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people. And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto

them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice and said, Now Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word." "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people."

"Favour with all the people!" Significant, that. It seems that Jesus was so popular a hero, that even his death as a slave at the hands of the Romans had not shaken that popularity. If anything, it increased it. His crucifixion was attended with a considerable disturbance in Jerusalem. So considerable in fact that it is described in terms of an earthquake — the veil of the Temple rent in two, "and there was a darkness over all the earth, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened." Beneath the extravagance of the oriental imagery, heightened in the present case by the repetition of the story from mouth to mouth for a score and ten years before it was reduced to writing, we can detect a substratum of truth. That a disturbance of serious proportions took place is not only possible but extremely credible. It was a social earthquake. The city as we have seen was thronged with an inflammable multitude of pilgrims, hot in their anger against the Romans and the Romanized local oligarchy, and ardently attached to the Carpenter from Galilee who had so boldly and so successfully challenged these oppressors of the people. We read that at this time, "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation

under heaven." They had been asleep at the time Jesus was seized. In that Gethsemane capture, "all the disciples forsook him and fled." As has been hinted, this need not necessarily imply cowardice. In the light of the entire narrative, both before and after, their escape seems rather to have been prompted by a right motive; namely, to run into the city and rally the people to the defence of their hero. Had the crucifixion been delayed a few hours longer, they would probably have accomplished their end. But he was led away to death early that morning — so expeditiously in fact and with such a disregard of the established procedure, that the thing was more a legalized lynching than an execution. A wailing crowd had followed the march to the Calvary spot; but the mob, left leaderless, was as yet too few in numbers and too unorganized to attempt a rescue from the Roman cohort. By afternoon, however, the people as a whole would have recovered from their heavy sleep of the night before, and would have received the news of the crafty stratagem which the Temple clique, in conjunction with their co-partners, the Romans, had perpetrated. It was too late then to tear their hero down from the cross alive, but the infuriated populace could vent their feelings on the Temple oligarchy; and this is what they seem to have done. Roman guards would after a while quell the uprising. But not until the great veil which hung before the court of the Temple had been torn asunder in the riot, and the city shaken from end to end.

This manifestation of the popular favour wherewith The Carpenter was regarded, continued and grew amaz-

ingly. The multitude aligned themselves with his disciples readily and in large numbers. His enemies having thrown off concealment, his adherents also come out into the open. His followers first "together were about a hundred and twenty." In one day it jumps to "three thousand souls." A short time more, and "the number of the men was about five thousand." Again we read of "the multitude of them that believed"; and they "were of one heart and of one soul." Despite all that the oligarchy can do, the movement has obtained a foothold in Jerusalem itself, where the enemy had thought themselves secure against intrusion. The disciples even gain a following from the outlying districts, so rapidly does the popularity of the liberation movement spread: "The people magnified them," and "there came also a multitude out of the cities round about." And a short time after this we overhear some one saying, of the adherents of The Carpenter: "Thou seest how many thousands of Jews which believe."

The oligarchy is in panic. "Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, the high priest asked them saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? And behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." But the propagandists "departed from the presence of the council, and daily in the Temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and to preach."

The oligarchy is "cut to the heart"; for this procla-

mation to the multitudes, of the coming of a kingdom of self-respect, a new order of society in which industrialism shall be glad and free because the world's workers shall be the world's owners, is hurting "vested interests." Therefore it tries persecution once more, and "entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison" — efforts to stamp out the fire which do but scatter the brands and spread the inflammatory work. It puts Stephen, one of the ringleaders, to death by stoning. Whereupon, "they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word."

One of the disciples, Philip, takes a decisive step. He transgresses the boundary between Jew and non-Jew. He goes to the city of Samaria, which is outside the pale of Judaism — had not The Carpenter expressly mentioned a "certain Samaritan" in eulogy? — and proclaims the "good news" there. His valorous example is contagious. Others of the fire-brand group went down there also and "preached the good news in many villages of the Samaritans." Worth noting, this. For if this liberation movement once reaches a point where it forgets Jewish lines and breaks loose among the proletariat of all countries, it will give Rome, inclined already to bad dreams because gorged with feeding, a nightmare that will be a nightmare indeed.

CHAPTER XII

ROME'S BLOOD LUST

THE new movement was known to its adherents as "The Way." This thing that was come into the world through The Carpenter was not a new philosophy or a new church or a new theology or a new religion. It was a new "Way." The purpose for which all philosophies and churches and theologies and religions exist, is to awaken people. In the person of the Galilean there was introduced into human society a leader who was proving universally an awakener. "He stirreth up the people," was the charge which the rulers brought against him. And it was a true charge. The proclamation of his "good news," namely, "God on the side of the people," stirred up the lower orders in a fashion that was new and wondrous, quickening the flow of their spirits and fructifying sterile natures. This awakened life then was "The Way" which we read of in The Acts. To be awake was a new way, a new state of affairs, for the common people. Previously they had been living a twilight existence, not complete darkness, and very far from complete light. For the proletariat to get out of that twilight state into broad noon, came upon the world with all the force of a discovery.

This new "Way" is seen to carry with it moral power,

so that character is transformed. It carries with it healing power, so that sickness collapses before it. It carries the power of reproducing itself, each awakened spirit being pricked on to awaken another; so that a propagandist zeal is manifest. It carries with it self-respect, which now narrowly interrogates some of the institutions of the day. The first eight chapters of the book of The Acts record the greatest liberation of human energies the world has seen. There is a swing and a sweep to the language, telling of elemental forces at work. Onlookers "were all amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?" Peter sought to explain it to them, and was not far wrong: "Ye men of Judea, these are not drunken. This is that which was spoken by the prophet: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'" And the dream they dreamed was, as we have seen, the dream of The Kingdom, that new and democratic order of society for whose coming the Galilean had lived and died, a society of happy-hearted workers, the industrial commonwealth of heaven.

However pleasant this dreaming of dreams might be for the lower orders, it was nothing less than nightmare for the master class. This "Way," implying as it did the awakenment of the masses, was a highly inconvenient thing to be loose in a world whose corner-stone was slavery. For slavery can not abide daylight, wide-awakeness. It loveth sleep and the dark, because its deeds are evil. Slavery and social sleep are twin brothers. Social sleep

brings on slavery; and slavery drugs people into a still deeper sleep. Between slavery and social arousement is a blood-feud irreconcilable.

Therefore the privileged class, living sumptuously by means of its exploitation of the workers, persecuted this "Way" unto the death. Jesus was an alarm-clock in the bedroom, and was hated with a murderous hate by the pillagers, because in awakening the sleeper he spoiled their trade. Their attempt to suppress him and his followers after him, constitutes much of the history of the next two hundred years. As we have seen, their efforts to crush "The Way" in Palestine had as a result that "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Thereupon the Roman Empire took up the task. The persecution at the hands of the Jerusalem oligarchy was a comparatively mild affair. But when Rome, past-master in the art of repression, set its hand to the task, it was the signal for a saturnalia of blood-lettings and fury — a savagery that is unmatched in human annals.

That the Roman Empire set its ponderous machinery at work, officially and with a dogged persistence for over a century, to destroy "The Way" of The Carpenter and his followers, is highly significant. Because Rome cared not at all how many religions there were in her empire. If anything, her attitude toward them was one of encouragement; they kept the mind of the masses occupied. Polybius naïvely states that in Rome religion was "used as a check on the people." There were a hundred religions in the Roman Empire, and a hundred more could

have been added without interference from the imperial authorities. Her pantheon was crowded with heterogeneous gods; there was a niche for every kind, from Osiris of Egypt to the Druids of the cruel North. Her governors in the provinces were under orders to suffer the people to have all the "religion" they wished. Gallio is a good type. As long as the disputes brought before him seemed a mere matter of "religion," he looked on with an amused or bored air, for Rome "cared for none of these things."

By "religion," however, Rome meant sects and doctrines and liturgies — anything that tended to take the mind off from every-day affairs, either in ascetic renunciation or in other-worldly absorption. The Fellowship of The Carpenter, however, came not under this head. There was in it a militant democratism which was unseemly and unheard-of in a "religion." The words of The Carpenter had too many "hard sayings" against organized privilege. He had been put to death charged with enmity against Cæsar; and that charge was found, in the attitude of his followers, to have been well founded. Rome and Nazareth could not continue on the earth at the same time. There was an oppugnancy between them, deep-set and irrepressible.

Other religions had been in large part the product of the priest or philosopher mind, and therefore were in the interests of the aristocratic class. This Galilean propaganda, however, had sprung from a carpenter. As such, it had taken its rise in a practical need, had set before itself a practical goal, and was seeking that goal by practical measures. It knew that the life of man is rooted and grounded in economics. However high his rhapsodizings

and theorizings, in three quarters of his being, man is an earth animal. And the conditions of his earth life shape his soul life. What the soil is to the plant, economics is to the people who grow up in it. "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Let pietists pietize as they may, material status has a direct reaction on mind and character. The Carpenter had no other notion of spirituality than the earth life exalted and transfigured. A spirituality cut loose from the world and adrift through infinite ether was to him a vaporous and sickly thing.

This is why the sabbath day by itself found in him so slighting a response. The other religions in the Roman Empire were essentially sabbath day religions. Pharisaism was one of these. Therefore the Pharisees got along amicably with the Romans. It was quite the arrangement Rome desired — she to control the six days and religion the seventh day. If Jesus had been content to proclaim that kind of a religion also, he would have saved himself a bitter Friday afternoon atop a skull-shaped hill near the Jerusalem gate, and hundreds of his followers a similar fate in every nook of the empire. An artisan, however, gets to attach a deal of importance to the work-days of the week. It is in them that he lives his real life and works his real work. The seventh day! let priests capitalize and accentuate that day as they will, it is to a workingman but an incident in his life, an interpolation — a mere comma on the page and not the words themselves wherewith his life is writing its annals. The Carpenter accordingly brushed the seventh day aside as of comparatively small account, and stressed

with an infinite stressment the six days in each week. He introduced thereby not a church-worship nor a desert-worship, but a work-worship. A vicious economic system can in six days destroy more soul than one seventh day, or seventy times one seventh day, can rebuild. Those six days out of each week, however, was the part that Rome also desired to control. She claimed ownership over the industrial life of the people, because industry creates wealth; and Rome coveted wealth. "Let me control a man's work, and I care not who controls his worship," was her principle. But that was with literal exactness the principle also of The Carpenter. Hence the head-on collision.

It is contended by the churchly school of historians that Rome's persecution of the christians was due to her demand of emperor-worship, a demand which the christians out of religious loyalty had to refuse. But this leaves the question still unanswered. If The Carpenter permitted in his followers a duality of allegiance, rendering unto the secular power obedience in secular things, and unto God obedience in spiritual things, there could not have been any conflict of loyalties. The formal offering of incense to the emperor was a civic rite — was so understood by everybody. It was quite compatible with worship of one's private and personal gods. Millions of religionists paid the civic rite to the empire, and at the same time maintained their own sects and rites and religions. Rome's national cult had only to do with the material side of life — as a matter of fact she doubted in her heart of hearts that there was any other side. The incense rite in question was in ordinary times

an oath of political allegiance to the empire, and in periods of sedition it was a test whereby to ferret out political malcontents. It had no religious significance. Principal Inverach, of Aberdeen, states it flatly: "Cæsar-worship was not considered to be opposed to the worship of the gods of the land." In the "Acta" of the six African martyrs, there has been brought to light the attitude of Rome's magistrates in the matter of this rite. Says the proconsul Saturninus there: "We swear by the genius of our lord the emperor, and we pray for his safety. Ye must do the same likewise." Nothing sacrilegious in that. The Roman Empire was directed by a coterie of shrewd financiers in the city of Rome; it was, as we have seen, their utter voidness of sentiment, religious or otherwise, that made the empire possible. Their creed had two articles: slavery and the taxes. Given these, they yielded every other point. To suppose that they set to work to kill hundreds and thousands of their subjects on the mere ground of religious differences — and at a time, too, when they were in sore need of people to man the empire — is to misread the financier type of that day, or of any day. If "The Way" of The Carpenter had been an other-worldly cult, indifferent to economics with true pietistic indifference, there need have been no human torches to light up the Coliseum at night; for the civic rite of obedience to the emperor would then have been a negligible affair, a matter of no eternal importance. In which case their deaths by the thousands were due to a misunderstanding — namely, that they saw in the emperor-rite an idolatrous squint which was not in it; a misunderstanding which an edict from Rome could

— and would — have removed. So that those two centuries of martyrdom would then have to be attributed to a hideous mistake, a blunder by both parties.

The fact remains that it was not due to a mistake. Such a supposition impeaches not alone the intelligence of the Romans, but brings a similar indictment against an army of martyrs, and against the head Martyr himself. For Jesus was crucified because he was regarded by the ruling oligarchy as an enemy of the existing order of society. And he was. His followers were put to death on the charge that they were "dangerous to social stability." And they were — as Rome understood "social stability." They denied the legitimacy of a world-wide empire of property rights, an empire whose industrialism was based on slavery, whose social system degraded the many for the exaltation of a few, and whose government was irresponsible and enforced by military might. Therefore they refused participation in the civic rites wherein that empire sought to glorify and perpetuate itself. At festival seasons the doors of christian homes were unilluminated. They would not recognize the empire's administration of the law, registering their mute contempt when before her tribunals, after the fashion of their master. Drafted into the army, they gave an unwilling obedience and were perpetual inciters to mutiny. Denying that philanthropy can palliate ills inflicted by injustice, they returned the tickets to the amphitheatre doled out to the populace by the millionairic magnates. This "obstinatio" was proof to Pliny of their treasonable temper. But they went still further. To this sullen obstinacy of refusal to participate, they added an active

propaganda against the existing order. They were firebrands loose among a proletariat that, because of the wrongs it was suffering, was highly inflammable. They hoped and prayed and worked for "The Regeneration" — the new earth wherein they could exult: "The extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land."

It was for these reasons that Rome, notorious for her toleration of all other religions, made an exception in the case of this "dangerous superstition," founded by a carpenter. She made his followers to know that a wolf has fangs. They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword." The butchery of them was made to do a double service — it served up a Roman holiday. In the amphitheatre the gladiatorial combats come first on the day's programme, the procession marching in and around the sanded enclosure and stopping before the emperor's box with an, "Ave Cæsar, imperator, morituri te salutant." The fightings finished, attendants sprinkle sand on the slippery blood patches. Silver cages are rolled in, and lions debouch, hungry with a two-weeks' hunger. Another gate opens, and a band of christians are driven in, men and mothers, young men and maidens. They appear not a band of weaklings, a-crouch with fear. To join the cult of The Carpenter in those days was to take one's life in one's hands. Weaklings risk not life for a Cause. Weaklings prefer death in slavery; strong men and women prefer death in combat against slavery. The lions perceive them. The

carnage is quite delectable, both to the beasts on the sanded floor and to the beasts on the seats mounting in tiers to the sky line. After a space the blood-thirst is slaked. The lions are re-caged. The spectators go to their homes to relate the day's sport: and the moonlight streaming down into the roofless Coliseum reveals mangled forms on the sand, followers of him who had also met death at the hands of the Romans for "stirring up the people."

The charge that christians set fire to Rome and caused the conflagration which in Nero's time destroyed the city, has been industriously denied by church historians. With the "Lamb-of-God" idea concerning the Galilean, the notion of wholesale incendiarism on the part of his earliest followers seems so preposterous that they have denied it off-hand — an indictment thus absurd could be quashed without the formality of a trial. However, if for nothing more than fidelity to historical fact, it is necessary to re-open the question and look into the evidence.

The awfulness of acts of incendiarism is modern, and with reason. Constitutional government to-day makes the righting of a wrong in most cases possible without recourse to blood and violence. Wherefore a resort to the torch is properly abhorred. A violent cure is no cure; it is but a plaster on the outside, and reaches not to the seat of trouble. In a republic of universal suffrage, barricaded streets and nitro bombs do not help matters much. It is sagacity, therefore, even more than tenderness of feeling, that has brought about on the part of modern reformers the substitution of ballots for bullets. But in Nero's day constitutional government was in

abeyance. Force was the only possible protection against force. Where a tyrant is absolute, assassination is the one argument that can be used. Tyrannies have, by means of the dagger, been tempered into a semblance of decency. To repel wolves with moral suasion is not christianity. Let the reader remember that one half of the early christians were slaves. Let him remember further that their white skins constituted an aggravation of their misery over what African slaves suffered in ante-bellum days. A slave youth or maiden who took the fancy of the Roman owner had no power to retain virtue. The slave was a chattel, absolutely without rights. He could not marry. Under Roman law he was not regarded as a human being; he was an "articulate instrument." A married slave was given no redress if the master took his wife. His children, born for servitude, belonged first to the master whose riches they thus increased, or who got rid of them if he did not wish to support them. Said Prudentius of St. Agnes:

> This maiden to the public brothel they consign,
> Unless she bow before the heathen shrine.

And Tertullian confirms the well-nigh unbelievable charge: "Recently, too, by condemning the christian maiden to the brothel (ad lenonem), instead of the lions (ad leonem), you acknowledge that to us the violation of chastity is more dreadful than any other form of punishment." And from another: "They order the maiden either to sacrifice or to be taken to the lupanar." Says a historian of the empire: "The sum of all negro slavery is but a drop compared with the sufferings of the Roman slaves." Rome was the poisonous centre of a poisonous

empire. If, therefore, the torch in the hands of the christians was the only resource left whereby to strike fear into the breast of a Nero and to mitigate the lot of the sixty million chattels who were "oppressed of the devil," that torch is bereaved of its awfulness, and even becomes a lamp shining in a dark place.

The writings of Tacitus constitute in the present case the documentary evidence. Examining that evidence, we find him expressly stating that christians "confessed the charge." True, it seems to have been Nero who brought the charge against these followers of The Carpenter, for there was a rumour that he himself had caused the conflagration. Nero's testimony, never notable for its veracity, would in itself have no weight in the present case. A motive for the act, however, is evidence that tells strongly with modern courts of inquiry. And in the matter of motive, Nero stands acquitted and the christians convicted. For the emperor had nothing to gain by the destruction of his own city, and actually put himself to considerable pains and expense to care for the thousands left homeless by the fire. Whereas the christians had a motive. Rome was the arrogant capital of an empire that was crushing half of the world's population into moral and spiritual degradation. Until she was out of the way, or had been taught by terror to respect the rights of the proletariat, no betterment of the lot of the masses could be looked for; rather, there was an accelerating course into ever deeper deeps.

This then is what Tacitus states: "Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called christians by the

populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate: and a most dangerous superstition, thus checked for a moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city as of hatred toward civilized (sic) society. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burned, to serve as a nightly illumination when daylight had expired." Concerning which, it may be remarked parenthetically that if Rome was the pattern and form of "civilized society," it is necessary to infer that her "civilized" condition had not reached alteringly to her modes of inflicting capital punishment.

Besides these words of Tacitus, there is New Testament evidence also connecting the conflagration with the christians; so that those who see in that event nothing but abhorrence will have to revise their canon of Scripture. For it is admitted by modern scholars that the "Book of Revelation" is an outburst of joy when the news arrived of the burning of the city. However, so desperate a remedy as revision of the canon is not necessary. Men can be found to-day who are quite cool and sane — constructive members of society — who are pre-

pared to validate and even to applaud a deed of violence, when necessary to prevent further violence. Rome's empire, based on terrorism, could be held in check only by terrorism. If therefore it should become necessary to rewrite our histories at this point and lay the burning of Rome directly at the door of the christians, it would scandalize no one except those who count the sheep-like quality the paragon of manly character.

CHAPTER XIII

BATTLE PICTURES

It is fortunate that the light of Rome's conflagration reached as far as Patmos. For that blaze lighted up the heavens for John, and revealed to him things in those heavens until then hidden.

Since the time we saw John, during the trial of Jesus, obtaining admission into the court room through his friendship with the high priest, a change has come over him. He has been living under the same roof with Mary the Mother, as her adopted son. A change in him set in almost immediately, because in The Acts he steps boldly to the forefront. And now at last, in "The Revelation of St. John," the influence of Mary upon him, and the teachings of the uncompromising Carpenter, have wrought their perfect work. For in this book we behold him as a stirrer-up of the populace, an economic come-outer. Lowell calls the Bible, "The most inflammatory book that could be circulated among a servile population." If so, "Revelation" is a fitting close to it, a cap stone entirely harmonious with the rest of the column. In the books preceding it, the overthrow of the oppressor and the coming of the toiling masses into their own, are either urged or threatened or planned. Here, in John's book, that consummation is announced as having arrived; and announced, further-

more, with a jubilancy of tone that lifts the language out of prose and almost into a strain of poetry.

The two pivotal themes of "Revelation" are, the burning of Rome and the coming of a new order of society. Rome is described under the terms, "Dragon," "Babylon" and "Scarlet Woman." In the time of Nero an inflammatory publication attacking Rome by name would have been hunted out with so ferret-like a thoroughness that few copies would have circulated and none could have survived. It is to the literary device of calling the city by an allegorical name we owe it that we have the book to-day. The disguise, however, is thin. By clearing away the overgrowth of imagery which covers the page with a true oriental abundance, the meaning underneath comes clear into view. Rome, sitting on her seven hills, is typed by "a great red dragon, having seven heads." John is at pains to nudge the reader, lest he should fail to catch the reference: "Here is the mind which hath wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains." Again: "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads; and they worshipped the beast saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them and power was given unto him over all kindreds and tongues and nations. If any man have an ear, let him hear."

A touch of gallantry appears in John's reference to Mary. Too often in ancient chronicles — not so noticeable in Jewish writings — the credit due to woman is minimized away. John includes in his book a tribute

to Mary, and betrays by the extravagance of his language the uncommon influence which that woman exercised upon all who came within the sweep of her personality. In his description he refers to her as the crowning glory of the twelve tribes of Israel; and he heightens the literary effect by contrasting her with the beast, Rome, which thought that it had by means of the Golgotha event devoured her son. He writes: "There appeared a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And behold a great red dragon, having seven heads. And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, and her child was caught up unto God."

It seems that Mary is no longer living under John's roof. The upheaval caused by the persecution which Rome has set on foot has compelled Mary to flee into a wilderness retreat: "When the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which had brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." John is at pains to explain that she is not lacking there for the necessaries of life — apparently in the wish to free himself from any charge of dereliction to the dying injunction of Jesus. Therefore he states

that Mary, in the wilderness retreat to which she has escaped, "hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days."

The economic viewpoint is emphasized. John peers under the surface tangle. He perceives that, beneath all of its trappings, governmental and military, the Roman Empire is at heart an industrial and commercial organization for revenue only. By means of that empire, the trade of the Mediterranean has fallen into the hands of large commercial corporations, whose headquarters are in Rome. This monopoly is enforced by the empire, that beast with its seven-hilled head: "He causeth all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the name of the beast." It is further interesting to note that in John's enumeration of the riches of Rome, slaves are mentioned last, the climax of it all; with the destructive effect of that slavery on the souls of the enslaved. Says he, prefiguring Rome's overthrow: "The merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold and silver and precious stones, and of pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood and of brass and iron and marble, and cinnamon and odours and ointments and frankincense, and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and beasts and sheep and horses and chariots, and slaves, and the souls of men."

We saw in the scene at the Calvary hill that Rome's ingrained thievishness extended even to stealing a helpless man's clothing. John had been an eye-witness of that scene, and his blood must have reached the boiling point at the cool insolence of those robber Romans. Perhaps he himself now has had some unpleasant experience of similar nature. It was not exceptional for a couple of Roman soldiers, meeting a lone man on the highway, to strip his clothing from him for their own use, and leave him to find his way home as best he could. For we find John including in his book a warning that one will "come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked."

John was apparently open-eyed to "The System," whereby Rome extended her empire over the earth by taking into the partnership the native aristocracy in each country. He likens this compact on the part of the local oligarchies to dallyings with a prostitute. Rome is a harlot who has seduced the local princes and magnates in each nation to forsake their own people and enter into unclean relations with her. The figure is powerful, even to the limits of propriety; but a strong image is needed in order to convey John's hatred of the "cohesion of wealth" whereby the working classes throughout the world are being reduced into a common slavery. He says: "I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast having seven heads. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. And upon her forehead was a name written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. And I

saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." "Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters. The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth. The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. For the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

But her downfall is being accomplished. The common people are ripe for revolt. Jesus, looking abroad upon the growing seditiousness of the submerged, had said, "The fields are ripe." John takes up the metaphor, and states that the harvest is commencing: "I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came, crying with a loud voice, Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle; and the earth was reaped."

So far is John from explaining away the charge that the burning of Rome was at the hands of the christians that he likens to an angel the one who bore the torch against her: "Another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of

the earth, and cast it into a great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden, and blood came out of the wine-press." "And another angel cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her and lament her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off and cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning."

At this point the scene shifts. John beholds coming into existence a new social order. Rome and all her works are thought of by him as having come ingloriously to an end. In place of that organization of society, whereby a few saddled themselves on the backs of the many, dawns a new age, the long sought commonwealth

of workers. And all the sons of the morning exult together. It is as the voice of many waters. Also there are harpers harping with their harps. And this new age shall not be for kings and privileged ones in purple. It shall be for the people: "I, John, saw the holy city coming down from God out of heaven. And I heard a great voice saying, The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. I come quickly."

CHAPTER XIV

A ROMAN CITIZEN

THE question presents itself, Why did not the deliverance mentioned by John come? "The things which must shortly be done," is the way he put it. Then why were they not done? "Behold, I come quickly." But the one mentioned did not "come quickly." "The time is at hand," said John. Then why did it not come to birth?

There has been a slip-up somewhere. The full-fed stream of democracy which had been setting in like a flood of mighty waters overflowing, fertilizing the earth with its richness, came after a while to a pause. A time arrived when its waters ceased to rise, then began slowly to recede, and before long the parched plain of human society, which had hailed the bursting forth of the spring with such unmistakable gladness, saw the stream dwindle into a rivulet, and finally disappear. Evidently something has happened.

We are not long in discovering what that something is. Rome the annexer has added one more to her list of annexations — she has annexed christianity. It is impossible in passing not to pay a tribute of admiration to her sagacity in the affair. Perceiving herself unable to kill this new Cult of The Carpenter, she kidnaps it. That the Roman Empire should have appropriated

to her own ends the Jesus she had crucified is a brazenness probably without parallel. Rome attributed to herself the ferocity of the wolf. We shall now have to credit her also with the wisdom of the serpent. The children of this world are in very deed wiser in their generation than the children of light.

The annexing process was started by a Roman citizen named Saul. Formerly a Jew, he deserted his nationality and with it his former name, and called himself thereafter Paul. Paul was undeniably sincere. He believed that in reinterpreting the christian faith so as to make it acceptable to the Romans he was doing that faith a service. His make-up was imperial rather than democratic. Both by birth and training he was unfitted to enter into the working-class consciousness of Galileans. He was in culture a Hellenist, in religion a Pharisee, in citizenship a Roman. From the first strain, Hellenism, he received a bias in the direction of philosophy rather than economics; from the second, his Pharisaism, he received a bias toward aloofness, otherworldliness; and from the third, his Romanism, he received a bias toward political acquiescence and the preservation of the status quo. The intensity with which he first along persecuted the Jesus cult was evidence of this mental make-up. In those Galileans Paul saw a contempt of the learned and cultured class, and thereupon the Hellenist in him flamed up; he saw in them a disregard of churchly morals, and the Pharisee in him flamed up; he saw in them further a revolutionary spirit, and the Roman citizen in him flamed up. So that during this period he had been very zealous in his opposition to "The Way." Then he

experienced conversion. But his conversion did not change these mental forms into which he had been cast, and in which his nature had been hardening through five and twenty years. Rather he carried his mental furniture over into the new allegiance. When he became a christian it was a Hellenistic, Pharisaic, and essentially Romanized type of christian, and very different from the Galilee brand.

And the proof of this is that the Galilean company, after they found out the real spirit that was in this "convert," refused to recognize him. On the contrary they quarreled with him bitterly. The fight is narrated in The Acts. References to it are also found in Paul's writings, in his complaints as to the way the original Galilean band are treating him. Scholars, finding a natural affinity with the Pauline type of mind, take Paul's side and explain the controversy as one in which Paul stood for christianity's release from the ceremonial law of judaism. But the Galileans were notorious for their disregard and irreverence of the Jewish ceremonials, and in the narrative of the quarrel in The Acts, Peter and his followers readily waive this point. No. The opposition between the two parties was deep-lying. It was more than a difference of view as to the importance or non-importance of Jewish ceremonial. It was an opposition of spirit. It was the fundamental antinomy: Jewish democratism in Peter and his fellow Galileans, as opposed to Roman imperialism in Paul.

For a long time preceding his conversion two men had been contending in Paul — a Roman and a Jew. The feud between them had been violent. It had torn his

spirit asunder. Finally on the Damascus road the Roman achieved the victory. To be jarred loose from his ancestral holdings, dazed him for a time; no intense nature ever yet expatriated itself without experiencing a wrench. When he recovered, the Jew in him was dead. The Saul had become Paul. True, Jesus was a factor in this conversion experience. But the Jesus to whom Paul went over was not the Carpenter of Galilee, but rather an imperial magnate, lord of a renewed and glorified Roman Empire. Christianity did not change Paul so much as Paul changed christianity.

Paul planned to make christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. It needed a religion badly. The catalogue of its vices, in the forepart of the Epistle to the Romans, is proof. Paul the Roman citizen saw nothing but excellence in Rome's world-wide empire. Only, it must be redeemed from its laxity of morals. Therefore he would bring to it the christ as its cleanser and thereby its perpetuator. It was the test of loyal citizenship among the Romans to seek out in every part of the world that which was most rare and valued, and bring it back to Rome as a gift. Thus her sons went forth and returned laden with richest trophies to lay at her feet. They brought to her pearls from India, gold chariots from Babylon, elephants from interior Africa, high-breasted virgins from the Greek isles, Phidian marbles from Athens. Paul also would be a bringer of gifts to the Rome that had honoured him and his fathers with the high honour of citizenship. And the gift he would bring and lay at her feet would be the richest of them all — a religion.

Accordingly Paul set about to cast christianity into

the mould of the Roman Empire. In his tours we find him travelling the main-trodden routes of the Roman legions and merchants. His geography is the geography of the empire. The various metropoli, the administration headquarters of the several provinces, become his headquarters also. He plans an imperial church patterned after the empire, in that there shall reign in it an iron uniformity, national qualities being abolished, and all things brought under one centralized and powerful head. Himself of an imperial temperament, so that he ill brooked any spirit of independency on the part of his subordinates — note his refusal to forgive John Mark, and his split with Barnabas — Paul found the Roman masterful type congenial, and sought to incorporate it into the christian system. He shares with the other christians the idea that a catastrophic end of the age is approaching. But the new order of society which he thinks of as following that cataclysm, is the Roman Empire still. Only Jesus will now be its imperator. Christ the emperor will have put all enemies under his feet. The new empire will be a despotism as iron-handed as the present one; only it will be a benevolent despotism.

Had Paul known The Carpenter personally, he would have known him as one aboriginally incapable of a concordat with despotism, how benevolent soever that despotism might be. The passive estate of the populace which all despotisms — good and bad — presuppose, was not regarded as the ideal state of society by him who was killed because "he stirreth up the people." Paul, in picturing Jesus as doffing his mechanic's apron to assume the pomp and purple of an imperator, betrays

ignorance of him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and who, when he sought a truly imperial garb, "took a towel and girded himself; after that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet." Jesus was emphatic that he had no designs on the emperor's throne.

Paul informs us that he obtained not his christianity from the original disciples. He even makes boast of the fact. Jesus had been very much at home in the company of Peter and James and John and the rest of the loyal Galilean band that had followed him from the first: "Ye are they which have been with me in my temptations." But Paul will have nothing to do with those Galileans. He explains with gusto that he refused to sit at their feet for instruction. Far from it. He is at pains to point out that after his "conversion" he went off into the desert of Arabia, and there syllogized a christianity of his own. The arrogance involved in this Pharisaic assumption of superiority over the Galilean disciples, because they belonged to the working class and had not had his advantage of a university education, were unbelievable did not Paul report it himself: "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia." From the start-off Paul makes it clearly apparent that if christianity is to attract Roman citizens such as himself, it will have to be taken out of the hands of those working-class disciples, and presented with some grace of scholarship and culture.

Paul has nothing to do with Mary the Mother. He never mentions her name. His quarrel with the Galilean

company implies a quarrel with her also, for she was passionately at one with them. Had he been humble enough to sit for a while at the feet of Mary and her fellow Galileans, he would never have made the mistake of attributing imperialistic designs to a leader who enjoined, "call no man master," and whose forehead refused to wear a kingly crown though the people urgently proffered it. But Paul had been too long "a Pharisee of the Pharisees." And it was not characteristic of the Pharisee type, with its pride of class and pride of culture, to take instruction from illiterate Galileans: "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us! and they cast him out." Paul's "much learning" had bred in him a distrust of "ignorant" people, meaning thereby people who had not a college education. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them"—a typically Pharisaic utterance, and one inconceivable in the mouth of The Carpenter, who, "when he saw the multitude, was moved with compassion on them," who commended their unaffected natures, who cherished a clasp from their calloused hands more than from the hands of the haughty scholar class, and who called them with infinite tenderness "babes and little ones," rejoicing that his Way, which was "hid from the wise and prudent," was "revealed unto babes."

The parallel between Paul and Cicero is striking. Each of them achieved an immortality of fame through consummate mastery of language. Both were of unimpeachable private character, and were even rigourists in the matter of personal purity. Both were given to self-

pity — took pleasure in recording their tribulations. And the life work of both contributed powerfully to buttress the falling walls of privilege and the ruling caste. Cicero forsook the upper bourgeoisie into which he had been born — "naturalized immigrant" is what some in Rome called him — threw in his lot with the senatorial magnates as against the cause of democracy, and lent his powerful gifts of tongue and pen to the aggrandizement of the seigniorial class and to the overthrow of agrarian agitators. Attitudinizing for posterity, he employed his literary talents to immortalize the things he had accomplished. The oligarchy welcomed his accession to their party, used him as long as they had need of his rhetoric, and then beheaded him. For a Benedict Arnold never yet found permanent honour and safety with the people he sought to serve. In Cicero's case the closing act of the drama has a touch of poetic justice. For we see his lifeless head in the lap of Fulvia, pampered daughter of the magnate class whom he had tried so desperately to serve; and she merrily pierces with a golden needle that tongue which had dripped the honey of matchless phrases.

Except when the Romans beheaded Paul at last — after they had used him also to the full — no instance is known of enmity between him and the Roman Empire. He was on good terms with that empire throughout. In return for his apostasy from the Jewish race with its intense traditions of democracy, Rome repaid him with befriendment at the hands of her military and judicial machinery. She petted him at every turn. Paul had "persecutions" — as he delights to relate — but they

were not at the hands of the Roman Empire. They were at the hands of the Jews, his former fellow countrymen, whose nationality he was trying to break up. Paul sought to degrade the Jews into accepting a place in Rome's cosmopolitan proletariat. He had renounced the Jewish race; why could not they renounce it also? It never seems to have occurred to him that his case and theirs were different. When he cut loose from Israel he had his Roman citizenship to go over into, so that, from a worldly point of view, his "conversion" on the Damascus road was distinctly a gain for him; it was a going over from Israel's inveterate insurgency into the Roman alignment, the party of the establishment, the rulers and possessors of the earth. For his Jewish brethren, however, to renounce their nationality would have meant a roofless and defenceless condition, for they had no Roman citizenship to go over into.

Since the time of Augustus the privilege of citizenship in the Empire was rigidly limited. If the Jews had followed Paul's exhortation and had expatriated themselves, they would have sunk into the proletary mass, without recognition in the Roman courts, with no rights that their conquerors were bound to respect, condemned to live their lives exposed to the tender mercies of a military dictatorship whose avowed purpose was to crush them steadily down into a status of slavery. Perhaps Paul would argue that a mere worldly thing like Roman citizenship was a trifling privilege compared to eternal riches, and not to be taken into account. The answer is that he made use of that trifling privilege in his own case. Again and again, when he found himself in a tight place, he evoked the

rights which were due him as a Roman citizen, and always with beneficent results to himself.

Paul was a stockholder in Rome's world corporation. And that stock by slow degrees had blinded him to the injustice of a social system in whose dividends he himself shared. This explains in large part why he accepted the political status quo, and preached its acceptance by others. Students of ethics have difficulty in reconciling Aristotle's defence of human servitude, "slavery is a law of nature which is advantageous and just," with his insight and logic in other matters. The difficulty resolves itself when it is recalled that Aristotle possessed thirteen slaves, and therefore had exactly thirteen arguments for the righteousness of slavery. Seneca, gifted in other things with fine powers of moral philosophy, saw no monstrousness in Nero that he should rebuke — Seneca was a favourite with Nero, and was using that favouritism to amass an enormous fortune. Paul was too highly educated — using the term in its academic sense — to be at one with the unbookish Galileans, and he was personally too much the gainer from Rome's empire of privilege to share the insurrectionary spirit of the Son of Mary. Said Gladstone: "In almost every one, if not in every one, of the greatest political controversies of the last fifty years, whether they affected the franchise, whether they affected commerce, whether they affected religion, whether they affected the bad and abominable institution of slavery, or what subject they touched, these leisured classes, these educated classes, these titled classes, have been in the wrong."

There was no work-consciousness in Paul. To be sure

he knew tent-making; but he had been taught it only as every Jewish boy — once again, the inveterate democratism of the race — was compelled by their law to learn some trade. Tent-making was not a part of himself; it was something tacked on. Jesus had been fundamentally a workingman; his speech reeks of it — the building of houses and laying of foundations; ploughing, baking, fishing — a homeliness in it all. But in Paul's writings there is not one figure drawn from tent-making. His allusions are literary. He was brought up in a book-world.

Paul was under the spell of Rome's material greatness. His heart was secretly enticed by her triumphal arches, her literature, her palaces on the Palatine, her baths, porticos of philosophy, gymnasia, schools of rhetoric, her athletic games in the arena. He thought of her history, her jurisprudence, her military might, the starry names in her roll of glory, her sweep of empire from the Thames to the Tigris, and from the Rhine to the deserts of Africa; and when, to this summary, came the pleasant reflection that he was a part of this world corporation, one of the privileged few to share in its profits, it was not hard for him to find reasons to justify his desertion of that poverty-stricken and fanatically democratic race of Israel off there in unimportant Palestine.

A true Roman, Paul preaches to the proletariat the duty of political passivity. To The Carpenter, with his splendid worldliness, the premier qualification for character was self-respect, and the alertness and mastery of environment which go with self-respect. But to Paul the primate virtue is submissiveness — "the powers that

be!" He sought to cure the seditiousness of the work class by drawing off their gaze to a crown of righteousness reserved in heaven for them—a gaseous felicity beyond the stars. Israel, holding fast to the enrichment of the present life, had kept its religion from getting off into fog lands, by seeking "a city that hath foundations." But Paul sought to hush all these "worldly" aims; he wooed the toiling masses to desire "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He was a true yoke-fellow of Pylades, the Roman play actor who, wishing to justify his usefulness to the master class, said to Augustus that, "it was for the emperor's advantage that the people should have their attention fixed on the playhouse rather than on politics."

Paul is an object-lesson of the hazards that beset the religious life once it lets go its holdfast in economics. His mystic absorptions, "speaking with tongues"—those orgasms of the spirit — would not have been, had he retained his Jewish traditions and indentured his spirituality to serve as the handmaid of democracy. The programme of life projects an orbit as to humanity's future which we have no power to calculate. Man's task is to chart the ascertainable dimensions of our social destiny, without seeking to plot the curve to infinity. Paul entered upon the path of intellectual sterility when he substituted a delirious mysticism and orgy, for the social enthusiasms which alone should intoxicate the spirit.

This Romanized rhetorician is eloquent in condemning the sins of the private life — herein a typical Pharisee. Stern against fleshly and convivial offences — the sins of the poor — Paul would probably have cast a first stone

against the woman taken in adultery. But he is strangely silent concerning the social sinners of the day. Six Roman grandees owned half of the then-known Africa. Banquets of criminal extravagance in Rome contrasted with working families everywhere pinched with hunger. During these thirty years preceding her destruction, misgovernment in Palestine was extreme. Slavery's living crucifixion had dehumanized sixty million toilers, and was reaching out now for the rest. The spread of Rome's iniquitous industrialism over the earth was like the march of a pestilence. But Paul had no rebuke for these things.

Even his no-work-no-eat doctrine was directed by him only against the poor. All around him were the rich, virginally innocent of toil, and yet who were gorged to the gullet. Paul sharpens no dagger of invective for these. Non-producers — some of whom are in rags and some in tags, but some also are in velvet gowns — should indeed be non-consumers. We hold here no brief for the idle poor. And Paul should not have accepted a retainer from the idle rich. In Paul's thought, economic foundations had no place. With his Roman reverence for property, he held that the huge inequalities of fortune were ordained of God, and their source therefore not a proper subject of human inquiry; so that he fulminates against "variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings." A stationary and immobile condition of the masses was precisely not included in the programme of The Carpenter. But in Paul's christianity, acquiescence is "all the law and the prophets" — civic arrogance on the part of a few, civic

indifference on the part of the many. He even held up the penury of Jesus as an object-lesson for the work classes; so that the Roman magnates, reseated on their shaky thrones by this theology of slavishness, might well have echoed Paul's gratitude for that mud-plastered hut in Nazareth, "that we through his poverty might become rich."

Valiantly have Paul's apologists sought to defend his course, by the argument that the Roman Empire was a good thing. Let us hear therefore from Ferrero, himself an Italian and natively in love with all things Roman, but whose scientific conscience compels him to exact knowledge, no matter across what heart-strings the knife may cut: "To understand the true nature of the Roman Empire we must abandon one of the most general and most widespread misconceptions, which teaches that Rome administered her provinces in a broad-minded spirit, consulting the general interest and adopting wide and beneficent principles of government for the good of the subjects. Subject races have never been so governed, either by Rome or by any other empire." And he amplifies the indictment in detail: "Destroying so many governments, especially in the Orient, Rome had at the same time decapitated the intellectual élites of the ancient world. Rome had, therefore, together with states and governments, destroyed scientific and literary institutions, centres of art, traditions of refinement, of taste, of æsthetic elegance. So everywhere, with the Roman domination, the practical spirit won above the philosophical and scientific, commerce over arts and letters. When Augustus began to govern the empire, the

classes that represent tradition, culture, the elevated and disinterested activities of the spirit, were everywhere extensive in number, in wealth, in energy. It was not long before these ultimate remainders vanished under the big economic gains of the first century. Greek thinkers disappeared. Philosophy gradually gave out. In painting and sculpture original schools were no more to be found."

Agrippa saw in Paul a friend of "The System"—himself named after that Agrippa who was the organizing genius of the empire during its foundation period, and without whom Augustus would perhaps have been unequal to the job. The Syrian Agrippa sees in Paul's type of christianity a cult that promises to be highly beneficial to the master class: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian." This Agrippa had long been scratching a perplexed skull for some device to keep the populace quiet. That surging, ominous "multitude," mourning its loss of liberty and refusing to be comforted, was giving him bad dreams at night. Now in Paul's cult of mystical frenzy and other-worldliness, he saw the thing which perhaps would turn the trick; therefore he wished it well. The Herods, as we saw, were uniformly hostile to Jesus. They were in every instance favourable to Paul.

The Carpenter had sought sharpness of distinction in economic principles, even though it cut square across the family circle: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." Paul, on the contrary, sought to blur distinctions, his idea being a cosmopolitan mass, a mush of humanity such as exploiters everywhere find favourable to their interests.

He exhorted that his hearers should think of "neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free." He craved that all men should speak well of him: "Paul announced for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all," — which reminds one of Cicero, who, confronted by some hard choice, would dodge by claiming friendliness to both sides. It is not strange that Paul had to defend himself from the charge of pointlessness: "So fight I, not as one beating the air." Cicero could not have surpassed Paul in the art of trimming his sails to the wind: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew. To them that are under the law, as under the law. To them that are without the law, as without law. To the weak, became I as weak. I am made all things to all men." (Whence perhaps arose the saying, " When in Rome do as the Romans do.")

To all of which one can only reply, and it is applicable to the Cicero tribe everywhere: Though you speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if you do not take part against the oppressor you are become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

We can understand therefore why Peter and his fellow Galileans quarrelled so bitterly and persistently with Paul. (The Epistles ascribed to John and Peter in the canon are attributed by scholars to-day to other authorships; they are too imbued with the Pauline atmosphere of Pharisaic pietism and submissiveness to have been the product of the Galilean mind, which was in utter opposition to Paul and his school.) The

Acts record an attempt to patch up the feud. But the peace there patched together was only a makeshift, and the quarrel broke out afresh. In the letters of Paul the discerning can read between the lines the controversy that is raging: "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be anathema." Paul says, referring to Peter: "I withstood him to the face." Paul's literary gifts have preserved his side alone of the quarrel, so that the Peter group seems to have been silenced. In reality, however, they were far from silenced. The feud resumed between their followers, lasted for generations, and coloured the history of the early church.

John was steadfastly with Peter in this antagonism to Paul. In a passage of his Book of Revelation he seems to hurl back at this Romanized Paul the anathemas which Paul was heaping upon him and his fellow Galileans. No name is mentioned, but the characterization points, if not to Paul, then to some one very like him. For the "false prophet" there referred to is one who, like Paul, had the power of performing "works" — psychic wizardry; it is some one who made a show of lamb-like patience; some one who was friendly to the Roman Empire, the "beast," and who helped make the proletariat friendly to that empire; and it was some one, finally, who wielded power conferred upon him by the "beast." Says John: "I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, and he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the

means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man." John adds that the triumph of this apostate prophet was to be short-lived because "the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet."

There is a suggestion that John was stung to this bitter invective — and John's vituperative vocabulary, once awakened, was of no small compass — by Paul's studious neglect of Mary the Mother, arousing in him a gallantry of rage. For this passage in which John uncorks the vitriol within him, follows close on the heels of the soaring tribute to Mary. Paul studiously ignored Mary the Mother. In fact, his attitude toward woman as a whole was typical of the hard Roman whose one ideal was subjugation, extending even to the wife of his bosom and the mother of his children: "Let the women learn in silence, with all subjugation. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve" — there speaks your true Roman, your true subjugator in every age. To Aristotle also, slaves were "living machines," and women were nature's failure to produce men. There is in Paul an absence of the finer sentiments: unthinkable that he should have gone to war for a Helen, "the face that launched a thousand ships." Despite his rhetorical sky-shooting and mystic exaltations, there is in Paul a hard and mechanical note. Unlike The Carpenter, he does not consider the lilies, neither does he see in little children a benediction. His, "the man is not of the

woman, but the woman is of the man; neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man," reeks of Rome's hard masterfulness.

If John's words against Paul — or against some one very like unto him — seem overheated, let the reader recall the circumstances under which they were uttered. Paul was a citizen — and a boastful one — of Rome's blood-stained empire, which at that moment under Nero was most blood-stained of any time in its history. Rome's persecutions lighted on the other christians, but they lighted not on Paul. The Galilean party saw their friends and kindred dragged into the Roman Coliseum, nailed to crosses there, and torn from the spikes by ravening beasts; or, dressed in tunics soaked with pitch, saw them burned to death, wrapped in shirts of fire. And Paul, himself exempt from that persecution, was boasting of his citizenship in the empire that was persecuting these others. Even when, like Cicero, he met his own death at last (when Rome had used him to her satisfaction), he still had wherewith to boast. For to him was meted out a soldierly death — beheading; a Roman citizen could not be crucified or burned to death.

It may be argued that the time was not ripe for democracy; that the people were too far sunk in bestiality; that the very taste for freedom was dead in most of them; that despotism, therefore, was the only alternative to anarchy; and that Paul, in strengthening as he did the forces of conservatism and reaction, was taking the statesmanly course.

To which the answer is that democracy itself is the best — and only — creator of a people fit for democracy.

Self-government is the one school for the teaching of self-government. Despotism justifies itself by pointing to the bestiality of the people. But despotism was in large part the cause of that bestiality. Where self-expression has free play, the higher instincts grow of themselves. Let self-expression be inhibited, the energies which well up so bountifully in man find vent now only through the lower appetites, and the wild passions which thereupon break loose make needful a further extension of despotism's police. It was not by chance that the formation of the empire was accompanied by the amatory verse of an Ovid, and by the outbreak in Rome of a reign of licentiousness on the part of her young men, who formerly had found their life interest in politics. The libertinism was pervasive, worming its shiny trail into the palace of Augustus himself and plaguing his latter days with family scandal. The overthrow of Cromwell and the Commonwealth was signallized by the drama of the Restoration Period. Affirmed Louis Quatorze, "L'état, c'est moi." The people took him at his word and went off into the license of France-of-the-eighteenth-century. The "vice" of Byron, which has been held up against him so pertinaciously, was in largest measure the souring of a nature whose fresh enthusiasms for humanity had been disappointed by the reactionary tendencies of the time. Russia at this moment, thwarted in her aspirations after liberty, is being thrust back on to her lower self; and as a consequence is pouring out a flood of pornographic literature which threatens to breed wild work and to make cossacks and knouts and g.bbets needful in even larger

numbers than before. It is a vicious circle; Tyranny begets in the people eroticism; and there is nothing more favourable to the despot than erotic exhaustion in his people.

The Carpenter of Nazareth, by reintroducing the common people to hope and zest and self-activity, was producing a moral transformation which would have made absolutism unneedful. Self-government impossible? To an awakened proletariat nothing is impossible. The awakenment itself was the great miracle. Given that, all other miracles followed. It is unscientific to judge that era by the ordinary canons of statecraft. The age was unusual. A movement more than ordinary was astir in the world, and would have produced results quite beyond the ordinary. If that wave of popular awakenment which from Nazareth was sweeping so multitudinously over the earth, had been suffered to continue, all things would have been possible to it. True, the democracies thus established would have been imperfect. There would have been strifes and warrings. Ignorance in the people would have given a grotesque warp to many an experiment in popular rights. To hitch one's wagon to a star is to be dragged swiftly — and some of the roads are going to be rough and jolty. But, amid all the strifes and gropings and grotesqueries, the proletariat of the ancient world would have remained alive; and for that, no price would have been too costly. Better any amount of strivings, any amount of upheavals, turnings and overturnings perpetual, than graveyard peace, the calm of death. Moreover, a proletariat which could produce The Carpenter, would not have

made altogether sorry work of self-government. His colossal trust in the people was because he himself was the product of the people. A working class that had brought forth an awakener of its energies such as he, could have been trusted to bring forth other leaders to guide those energies. New occasions would have brought new capacities; for an age of awakenment is but another name for an age of genius.

But it was not so. The re-energizing wave faltered, came to a halt, fell back. Nothing could have impeded christianity from the outside — obstacles did but bring increase of momentum, the blood-baths soaked new strength into her sinews. Christianity was betrayed from the inside. Rome insinuated herself within the christian ranks, and there did her work. By a reinterpretation of The Carpenter — under the pretence of adding to his glory — she exorcised from that magic name its power of evoking democracy; she turned it into a reinforcer of despotism. It was a masterpiece of strategy. The goad which had been pricking the people into unrest, was now a flail beating them down into submission. Religion with its powerful leverage on the human heart no longer urged to liberty and self-respect. It lent its ghostly counsels now to quietism — obedience, at any cost of personal values. If the light that is in the world be darkness, how great is that darkness!

And the result — the death of the ancient world. Jerusalem, set in a landscape of desolations, gives to the traveller to-day the feel of an infinite loneliness. Jews

of the Orient in their parti-coloured garments gather to this day before the Wailing Wall, that fragment of the ancient temple structure quarried by Solomon's workmen: "Hasten, hasten, O Redeemer of Zion," is the hysterical prayer. But the passionate lamentation is answered back only by the wall, sole relic of Israel's national glory, and whose stones have been smoothed by the kisses now of many generations. The East, once the joy and pride of the world, is to-day a problem and a menace. By its fruits ye shall know the Roman Empire. The city of Rome was built on the site of extinct volcanoes. The stones in her temples were the result of igneous action — her walls were built of lava conglomerate streaked with red. Not altogether unfitting. It is a type of the source of her splendours. Rome's gorgeousness was at the expense of native fires of genius in a hundred nations — her pride and wealth were built out of and upon extinguished revolutions. Her history, threaded with blood, achieved its glory at the cost of many peoples. Rome to-day gives to a visitor the sense of something sepulchral, as though she was the burial place of the zest and joy and spirit of the ancient world.

Wherefore our judgment of Paul and his fellow Romanists stands unreversed. Paul the Apostle is the term he coveted. Peter and the Galileans in their lifetime denied it unto him — would probably have called him Paul the Apostate. Perhaps too harsh a term, that latter. Paul did according to his lights, but the lights that were in him were darkness. His niche in the abbey of fame is

secure — his literary gifts have secured him that immortality. But the regeneration comes not through rhetoric. "The powers that be!" — there is no guidance in that star. Therefore the democracy will not found on Paul. Rather it will found on the Carpenter of Galilee, and with him will ask in every age whether the powers that be are the powers that ought to be.

CHAPTER XV

ANNEXED

THE process of Romanizing the Man of Nazareth which was begun by Paul, was taken up after him by Greek philosophers. We have seen that an imperialized Jesus was quite what the Roman Empire wished; she would thereby be rid of an insurrectionary force that was giving her no small trouble, and would, furthermore, in the portrait of an imperial christ, obtain a buttress to her own imperial idea. She was prepared, therefore, to encourage teachers who would continue the business inaugurated by Paul. In the schools of Greek philosophy she found them.

The Greek brain for a long time back had been renting itself to the "prince of this world." In Athens and the other cities of the peninsula, society was based on slavery. But her philosophers saw in that nothing to criticize. They were themselves allied with the slave owners. Philosophers belonged to society's upper crust, and could not be accused of any proneness to caste disloyalty. Hatch has convincingly pointed out the influence of Greek ideas on christianity. He says of these Greek sophists that they made both money and reputation. The more eminent of them were among the most dis-

tinguished men of the time. We remember that The Carpenter did not stand high socially. But these Greek philosophers, who, in the person of their successors, were to interpret him to the world, were the pets of society. They often became domestic chaplains. Lucian in his essay, "On Persons Who Give Their Society for Pay," has amusing vignettes of them, singularly like what is pictured of chaplains in the novels of a hundred years ago. Philosophy had become a profession. It afforded an easy means of livelihood; therefore it had grown degenerate. Philosophers were employed on affairs of state at home, and on embassies abroad. They were sometimes placed on the free list of their city, and lived at the public expense. When they died — sometimes before — statues were erected in their honour. This was the class into whose hands The Carpenter fell for interpretation.

It is needless to say that in handling his life they interpreted away much that had been there, and interpreted into it much that had not been there. And this, not altogether with malice aforethought. Out of two hundred thousand people in Athens, all but twenty-seven thousand were slaves. Thus Greek philosophers had lived so long in a society whose industrialism would not stand investigation, that the habit of keeping away from the theme of economics had become ingrained in their thought processes — brain tracts devoted to thoughts industrial, were not in their case "shovelled out." They were unable to grasp the thought of Jesus as connected in any way with the working class. His life presented difficulties to them. The conception of him as an im-

perial conqueror, and as the divine Wisdom and Power, was inconsistent with the meanness of a common workingman's career. Accordingly they resolved his life into a series of symbolic representations. The Greek mind, lifted into the haze of metaphysics and sedulously guarding its aloofness from such inconvenient subjects as work and the workers, had become complex, unreal, artificial. Christianity in their hands became likewise unreal and artificial. They crushed out its uncultivated earnestness. Laying more stress on the expression of ideas than on the ideas themselves, they tended to suppress the very forces which had given christianity its place, and to change the rushing torrent into a broad but feeble stream. In the time of The Carpenter sheep was the commonest form of live stock in Palestine. To thrust home to his hearers the essential wolfishness of the invasive Romans, he used often the figure of sheep being devoured by wolves. And he saw that his own death was like to come from that quarter: "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them." But the church leaders reversed the figure. They proclaimed that the christian trait is fundamentally one of sheepishness — that the common people were made to be eaten legitimately by the grace of God. And they exalted as the type of manly perfection an Agnus Dei.

This emasculation of The Carpenter took place not without protest on the part of the lowly among his followers. We find traces of a controversy. Says Ter-

tullian: "The simpler-minded, not to say ignorant and unlearned, men who always form the majority of believers, are frightened at the philosophy of the doctrine of the Trinity." And he himself cries out: "What resemblance is there between a philosopher and a christian?" Clement of Alexandria refers to the objection raised by the common people against the philosophizing trend of himself and his fellow theologians: "I am not unaware," says he, "of what is dinned in our ears by the ignorant timidity of those who tell us that we ought to occupy ourselves with the most necessary matters, those in which the faith consists; and that we should pass by the superfluous matters that be outside them." And he cites those "who think that philosophy will prove to have been introduced into life from an evil source."

But the common people, in these protests, were overridden. It suited "the powers that be," to have christianity metamorphosed into a cult of submissiveness and a system of philosophy. And metamorphosed it was. The history of the second century is the history of the clash between these new mystical and metaphysical elements in christianity, and its earlier forms. When the struggle ended, there was seemingly so complete a victory of the original communities and of the principles which they embodied, that their opponents seem to vanish. But in reality it was a victory in which the victors were the vanquished. There was so large an absorption by the original communities of the principles of their opponents as to destroy the main reason for a separate existence. The absorption was less of speculations than of the tendency

to speculate. The residuum of permanent effect was mainly a habit of mind — an instinctive tendency to throw christian ideas into a philosophical form. A century and a half after christianity and philosophy first came into close conflict, the ideas and methods of philosophy had flowed in such mass into christianity as to have made it no less a philosophy than a religion. So subtle had been the process, that even those Church Fathers whose instincts were on the side of the people against their oppressors were seduced thereby, and, while calling out against economic injustice, gave their allegiance to a theologizing trend which was to rivet the injustice beyond all power to loosen.

It is needless to state that in syllogizing Jesus into a system of metaphysics, these successors of the sophists were at pains not to displease their Roman lords and masters. Therefore it came to pass that The Carpenter, lifted in their thought into an imperial dignity, was worked into a theological system modelled faithfully on Roman lines. The idea was fundamental in the Roman state that her patrician upper class was of a different descent from the plebs, the common herd. The two were not made of the same dust. Between them there was supposed to be a great gulf fixed, which could by no possibility be bridged or crossed. Rome's official designation was, "The senate *and* the Roman people" — Senatus populusque Romanus. That conjunctive *que* is eloquent. The senate — the aristocracy — were not a part of the Roman people, but were in a different category. The difference was that between owners and the owned, rulers and the ruled. And this distinction was

carried over into her legal procedure, creating there the patron-and-client relationship so fundamental in Roman life. The plebs had no standing in the law courts. The awful majesty of the Roman State would have felt itself compromised had it admitted the plebeian, the common folk, to its privileges. Therefore the only method whereby a pleb could bring a suit in law was through the person of some patrician who consented to be his patron. At times this was little more than a legal form. Nevertheless the fiction was maintained: a pleb must become a client of some patrician, and through the latter present his case in court. The purpose was to perpetuate the distinction between the classes. Accordingly, in the process of Rome's annexation of christianity, this patron and client relationship was worked into the christian system. A "First Person of the Trinity" was posited, as the court. Jesus was made into the patrician patron, and the common people were the plebs who had no recognition at the court in their own right, but obtained it only through the patron. "If any man sin we have an advocate with the father" — there is Rome's social organization transfigured into a theology.

Christianity was now in a form which Rome could use. Therefore she adopted it. Rome had not been changed; christianity was changed. But Rome went through the process of being "converted" to the new religion. Pope Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine ratified the agreement. Constantine, with tongue in cheek, solemnly announced that he had become a "convert." Thereupon the empire prefixed the title "Holy"

to its name. This "Holy" Roman Empire proclaimed itself the legitimate child of heaven; and proceeded to overawe the victims of its industrial exploitation, through terror of the anathema. This weapon of intimidation was effective; it reached beyond the grave and made the gates of hell into an additional slave dungeon for the punishment of the seditious.

Property was now secure. Rome's hard-pressed financiers were hard pressed no longer, for the people were cowed by the two-fold terror, the powers temporal and the powers spiritual. Palestine, that immemorial seat of seditiousness, had long before this been crushed out of human resemblance by Titus in the Jewish War of Revolution. Many a Jerusalemite, amid the crash of falling walls, recalled words of warning uttered five and thirty years before by a carpenter from Galilee as he was being led through her streets by a Roman cohort, words foretelling the ultimate design of Rome the Invader: "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Awful was the carnage at Jerusalem's destruction — a million killed, is Josephus's estimate. The Jews who were not slain in war were sold into slavery, reduced to pauperism, or driven from Palestine to become the "Wandering Jew" on the face of the earth from that day to this. And a Roman ordinance, in order to make their title to Palestine sure, "assigned the whole country to the emperor as his private possession." Palestine was a fat carcass, and there the eagles were gathered together. This destruction of Israel's national existence made the Pharisee party within her supreme, for there was no

longer civic aspirations and political tasks to absorb the Jews in the life of the day. The Pharisee therefore was left to develop his ritualism and his churchly aloofness unopposed. Judiasm from that day became a church in the midst of society, instead of the democratic leaven of society which it had formerly been. The lion of the tribe of Judah now licked the hand of its captor, docile with a lamb's docility. Thus the Roman Empire had peace — the protester had been done away.

A calm settled down upon society, the calm of death. The barbaric invasion took place. But it left the "Holy" Empire unshaken, for the barbarians yielded to the ghostly bondage. The master class continued to possess the world and all the inhabitants thereof. For christianity was now on the side of Privilege, so that the latter could exult, "I will not fear what man can do unto me." Machiavelli read the secret. Of ecclesiastical principalities he wrote: "They are sustained by the powerful ordinances of religion, which are so powerful and of such quality that they maintain their princes in their position no matter what their conduct or mode of life may be. These are the only princes that have states without the necessity of defending them, and subjects without governing them; and their states, though undefended, are not taken from them, whilst their subjects are indifferent to the fact that they are not governed, and have no thought of the possibility of alienating themselves from their princes." Said Aristotle, in his "Politics": "Subjects are less apprehensive of illegal treatment from a ruler whom they consider god-fearing and pious.

On the other hand, they do not easily move against him, believing that he has the gods on his side."

So thorough-goingly was christianity changed from its original form of a Way, a Democracy, an Awakenment, that the transformation shaped the New Testament when the canon of scripture came to be made up. The original simplicity of the gospel story was overlaid by explanatory glosses, which were inwoven into the text itself. Paul's pietism was given canonical authority by the inclusion of his writings, and of writings coloured by his spirit, into the Book. Christianity became so saturated with metaphysics and pietism that even a thinker so clear visioned in other things as Seelye, regards Paul and his fellow Hellenists as the essential heart of the New Testament.

Writes Seelye — and his words are the more significant because he perceives that a pietistic interpretation of christianity is a disservice to it in our day: "The whole modern struggle for civil and national liberty has been conducted not indeed without help from christianity, but without help from the authoritative documents of christianity. Liberty has had to make its appeal to those classical examples and that literature which were superseded by christianity. In the French Revolution men turned from the New Testament to Plutarch. The former they connected with tyranny, the latter was their text-book of liberty. Plutarch furnished them with the teaching they required for their special purpose, but the New Testament met all their new-born political ardour with a silence broken only

here and there by exhortations to submission. But this, which has been the weakness of christianity in recent times, was its strength in the first ages of its existence. The spirit of liberty and the spirit of nationality were once for all dead; to sit weeping by their grave might for a time be a pious duty, but it could not continue always expedient or profitable. It was therefore the strength of christianity that it renounced this unprofitable ideal. When it came forward, in the age of Constantine, to lead the thought of the empire, it presented a programme in which liberty and nationality were omitted. A noble life had before been necessarily a free and public life, but the New Testament shows how virtue may live under the yoke of an absolute government, and in a complete retirement from politics. Thus the age was made somewhat happier by receding somewhat further from liberty. Tyranny was more cruel, and misery was more wide spread; but it was less felt, because the age had occupations which absorbed it, and was possessed with thoughts which, in a measure, numbed the sense of pain."

So strongly is the Pauline superstition upon Seelye that he feels coerced to define religion itself in terms of slavishness and passivity: "The age was religious, because it was an age of servitude. Religious feeling is generally strong in proportion to the sense of weakness and helplessness. It is when man's own resources fail that he looks most anxiously to find a friend in the universe. Religion is man's consolation in the presence of a necessity which he cannot resist; his refuge when he is deserted by his own power of energy or ingenuity.

Negroes are religious; the primitive races, in the presence of natural phenomena which they could not calculate or resist, were intensely religious; women in their dependence are more religious than men; Orientals under despotic governments are more religious than the nations of the West. On the other hand, a time of great advance in power, whether scientific power over nature, or the power to avert evils, given by wealth and prosperity, is commonly a time of decline in religious feeling." From which would follow, that absolutism, by keeping the people cowed, is God's best ally.

We prefer the testimony of Nietzsche as to christianity's inmost meaning and essence. A staunch advocate of fist government over the common people, he warned the ruling oligarchy against christianity in its primitive form as their arch enemy. His rage against the democratizing spirit of The Carpenter betrayed him into heats which go beyond veracity. Nevertheless, despite the excess of damnatory epithet, the picture of primitive and essential christianity which here follows has truth above that drawn by Seelye. Says Nietzsche: "The poison of the teaching of 'equal rights for all,' has been spread abroad by christianity more than by anything else, as a matter of principle. Christianity has, from the most secret recesses of bad instincts, waged a deadly war against every sentiment of reverence and distance between man and man. Let us not underestimate the calamity which, proceeding from christianity, has insinuated itself even into politics. At present nobody has any longer the courage for separate rights, for rights of domination. And if the belief in

the privilege of the many makes revolutions, and will continue to make them, it is christianity — let us not doubt it — it is christian valuations which translates every revolution merely into blood and crime. Christianity is a revolt of all that creeps on the ground, against what is elevated."

Even Seelye, when his view goes beyond the New Testament and takes in the scriptures as a whole, is compelled to state: "No book presents morals in such inextricable union with politics as the Bible." And Harnack affirms: "No religion, not even buddhism, ever went to work with such an energetic social message, or so strongly identified itself with the message, as we see to be the case with the gospel."

But Harnack was writing of christianity in its early and purest form, before it had been captured by the Romanists and the Hellenists. The Greek philosophers "improved" christianity by emasculating the virility out of it. The Galilean had been a "stirrer up of the people"; but at the hands of the Greeks he was pictured as a universal sedative, a quieter of the people. He had been a working man at home in the company of workingmen; now he was domiciled in kings' houses, among those "which are gorgeously apparelled and live delicately." His "good news" had promised comfort to the oppressed, by doing away the oppressor; now it was presented as a morphine pill, numbing the sense of oppression. He had proclaimed a kingdom of self-respect, so easy of comprehension that a wayfaring man could not err therein; now it was transformed into a system of metaphysics, so that only those trained in dialectics could

"enter in amidst the subtleties of parables." The common people protested, but their protestings were in vain. It suited the ruling class to have this cult of The Carpenter made over into a ritual for the learned and the élite. And made over it was. Onto its original simplicity and democratism was grafted a blend of monarchism and metaphysics, which was declared now to be a very law of the Medes and Persians, unchangeable forevermore; and the people were exhorted to "receive with meekness this engrafted word." Thus it came about that that which had been the restoration, the awakened life, the "joy in believing," was made into another burden on the backs of the people, a religion which they had to carry, instead of a religion that would carry them.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"

CHAPTER XVI

A "HOLY" EMPIRE

He who was killed because "he stirreth up the people," remarked to his following once upon a time, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"; implying that a relationship exists between a knowledge of facts and popular liberty. History since that time has abundantly confirmed the statement. Despotism has been a consistent enemy of the truth-seeking spirit. And the reason is not far to find. A system of society's organization whereby a few ride on the backs of the many, is so irrational on the face of it that it needs but to be seen to be terminated. Therefore it must not be seen. The people must be discouraged from peering. A spirit of blind acquiescence must be furthered among the populace. Prying eyes must be put out; and this, no matter what the realm toward which those prying eyes might be inclined to turn. For the inquisitive spirit itself is the perilous thing. Once let there get abroad among the people a mood to know the facts, say, of the solar system, and it would not be long before that same interrogation would direct itself toward the facts of the social system. Thinking on the part of the people at large is the thing "dangerous to civilized society." Mind is a social explosive, and is to be used, therefore, under

carefully regulated restrictions. An industrialism based on exploitation is a delicate thing at best; it will not stand much jarring. A society wherein a privileged class is separated from the toilers underneath by a thin and heaving crust, is unstable; people must be cautioned to walk on tiptoes. One thinker let loose in such a world, to look around him with the blinders off and to move about with the shackles off, might do harm to that crust which many years could not repair. Therefore all thinking must be done by the duly accredited agents of the Establishment. Politics, history, economics, theology, the universe — these are "among the enclosed facts of life," and are not to be peered into by every tom, dick and harry. A gloss, a carefully prepared commentary, must be laid over these departments of knowledge; and the people must be trained to look at them only through the interpretation that has been handed down.

Accordingly we find the Church suppressing every tendency to independence of thought. For this "Holy" Roman Empire, let it be emphasized, was naught but Rome's old empire of property, with religious sanctions added to it as a sort of ghostly police. Intimidation by means of "the greater anathema" had been found more effective than the former method of intimidation by armed cohorts. Soldiery can work upon the people only from the outside, and is mechanical at best. But the church, with its awe-inspiring liturgy and its infinite reserves of damnation, kept fear alive in every heart — it beat down the seditious prompting whilst it was yet but a thought and ere it had come to birth in deed. Moreover, soldiery operates on the people only

at fitful intervals. But the ghostly intimidation was reduced to a routinary system, at work continuously week by week, and even day by day. It was framed so as to connect with every detail of life, and reached the people by a net-work of multitudinous arms. The master class, whose sleep had long been broken by alarms of insurrection, had found at last a salve against a return of the goblin night visitors.

This partnership between the oligarchy and the priesthood was not a new departure for the Roman state. The empire when it became "Holy" carried the principle more thorough goingly into effect; but the principle itself had been known in Rome from earliest times. Her financiers had been too shrewd not to perceive the advantage which comes when the Pilate party and the Caiaphas party work in partnership against the "stirrers-up of the people." The patrician class in Rome had early taken the precaution of keeping the office of pontifix maximus in their hands. This "supreme priest" had his official residence beside the bridge crossing the Tiber. The office carried with it large revenues. It was moreover a post of influence. By declaring that the auguries were unfavourable, the pontiff was able at any time to stop public business. Julius Cæsar had signalized his entrance upon public life by securing his election — through a prodigal expenditure of funds — to this office. Julius the Dictator, in the office of pope of Rome and wearing the high-priestly robe, must have caused a smile on many a countenance. He performed his duties as head of the college of pontiffs with a broad grin; for he was frankest of the frank, and declared — to his pals —

his cynicism toward the legends on which reposed the organized religion of the day.

The difference, therefore, between the Roman Empire and the "Holy" Roman Empire, was one of degree and not of kind. Under the former, the imperator of the legions had been chief, and the pontiff his auxiliary. Under the second the pontiff was chief, and the imperator in the subordinate position. In both cases, protection of the privileged class in their favoured position atop of the masses, was the aim. In the earlier empire a coterie of millionaires in Rome with the emperor at their head, dictated the policy of the State. In the "Holy" Empire the propertied class was either ecclesiastical, such as the priest-princes had been in Jerusalem, or they were secular lords in closest coalition with the priest power. "Loyalty to the king, obedience to the church," was now the two-fold slogan wherewith the minds of the people were flailed into submission.

The extent to which the church became a partner in the economic oppression of the day, attracted attention even at the time. Said Bishop Alvaro Pelayo — perhaps turning king's evidence through failure to get his share of the spoils: "Whenever I entered the apartments of the Roman court clergy, I found them occupied in counting up the gold coin which lay about the room in heaps." We are certified: There were vast crowds of placemen, and still greater ones of aspirants for place. The successful occupant of the pontificate had thousands of offices to give away — offices from many of which the incumbents had been remorselessly ejected; many had been created for purposes of sale. The integrity and

capacity of an occupant were seldom inquired into; the points considered were, What services has he rendered, or can render, to the party? How much can he pay for the preferment? The church degenerated into an instrument for financial aggrandizement. Vast sums were collected in Italy; vast sums were drawn under all manner of pretences from surrounding and reluctant countries. The policy of the Byzantine court had given to christianity a paganized form. With this great extension there had come to the christian party political influence and wealth. No insignificant portion of the vast public revenues found their way into the treasuries of the church. In the West, such were the temptations of riches, luxury, and power presented by the episcopate, that the election of a bishop was often degraded by frightful murders. William of Malmesbury gives a picture of the partnership that existed: "Their nobles, devoted to gluttony and voluptuousness, never visited the church, but the matins and the mass were read over to them by a hurrying priest in their bedchambers before they rose, themselves not listening. The common people were a prey to the more powerful, their property was seized, their bodies dragged away to distant countries; their maidens were either thrown into a brothel or sold for slaves."

To suppose, therefore, that the persecutions which science suffered at the hands of the "Holy" Empire were prompted by zeal for orthodoxy, is to forget the economic. Bruno, Copernicus, Galileo, and their compeers were "stirrers-up of the people," by awakening in them an independent mind, a mood of interrogation; therefore they

were dangerous to property. Not fear for orthodoxy but fear for their revenues awoke the sleuth hounds of the Inquisition. Thirty-two thousand burnings at the stake! Mere ardour for ideas shall not explain a holocaust of that dimension. It is only when the pocket nerve is touched that a reaction is evidenced on a scale so widespread and with so murderous a malignity. Intellectual disputations often develop bad feeling; a heated contestant may in some moment of passion resort even to physical violence. But when the fagot is adopted as an instrument of state, when the fires of the burning light up half a continent and are rekindled with grim regularity for the space of a hundred years, let the beholder know that dividends and not doctrines are behind the scenes and pulling the strings. Powerful material interests felt themselves threatened by the "damnable and pestilent heresies" of the Galileo crowd. Therefore their anathema of the heretics — "falsa, impia, scandalosa!" Therefore the Index, the Inquisitorial Board at Rome, the torture chamber, and the nightly fires of burning.

The murders of the Inquisition often had money as their direct object, for the property of the burned person was confiscated and went to the authorities who did the burning. The Roman Empire at its old tricks! It had been a customary procedure under the Cæsars for a victorious faction to enrich itself by pricking for proscription the names of people who had accumulated some wealth, and after they were put to death, calmly annexing the dead men's fortunes. Herod as we saw had followed this method in Palestine, even to the extent of searching the coffins of his victims. So now, it is

written: As time went on, this practice of the Inquisition became more and more atrocious. Torture was resorted to on mere suspicion. The accused was not allowed to know the name of his accuser. He was not permitted to have any legal adviser. There was no appeal. The Inquisition was ordered not to lean to pity. No recantation was of avail. The innocent family of the accused was deprived of its property by confiscation; half went to the papal treasury, half to the Inquisition. Life only, said Innocent III, was to be left to the sons of unbelievers, and that merely as an act of mercy. The consequence was that popes, such as Nicholas III, enriched their families through plunder acquired by this tribunal. Inquisitors did the same habitually.

When the Roman Empire had defended her revenues by her military arm, she safe-guarded and developed that arm to the full; no expense that promised to strengthen her soldiery was deemed excessive, no danger threatening its efficiency was deemed small. Now, with the prefix of the "Holy" to her title, her means of intimidation had changed to spiritual police. Therefore she spared no pains to build up this new defence — ritual and dogma. "The faith once delivered," became Rome's policy of state. Revenues depended on the preservation of "the faith;" therefore it must be preserved at any cost. Were there inquisitive minds who whispered that this "faith once delivered" was a system of cunningly devised fables put together by Greek philosophers? Such whisperers were dangerous. They were "pestilent gainsayers," and must be attended to with rack and fagot.

To know the truth would make the people free; therefore they must not know. Knowledge was put under the ban. "Restless spirits and impious heretics" were met with the thumb-screw, the stretching rope, and the boot-and-wedge.

The faintest show of an independent turn of mind puts in motion straightway all the enginery of torture. Bruno is sentenced to be killed, "as mercifully as possible, and without the shedding of blood" — a ghastly euphemism, signifying death by burning. Copernicus can present his discovery to the world only by the resort of a grovelling apology (so that he cries from his tombstone, "give me only the favour which Thou didst show to the thief on the cross"). Thus he grovelled: "I, Galileo, being in my seventieth year, being a prisoner and on my knees, and before your eminence, having before my eyes the holy gospel which I touch with my hands, abjure, curse, and detest the error and the heresy of the movement of the earth." The Consistory of Stuttgart warns Kepler "not to throw christ's kingdom into confusion with his silly fancies." Kepler must outwardly conform; but to himself he stoutly affirms; "I do think the thoughts of God." In Alexandria, Cyril whets the mob against Hypatia; they tear her corpse asunder, and with shells scrape the flesh from her bones.

Because it contributes to overawe the populace, those teachers of theology are encouraged who portray nature as an enginery of terror, safety from which can be found only under the roof of Mother Church. Accordingly the lightnings are seen as the flaming spears of God; the

tornado is the blast of his anger; the earthquake is the stamping of his rage; comets are fireballs flung from his hand. Goodman Voigt denounces as "atheists and epicureans" all who refuse to see in comets the warrings of an angry God. Not that the parish priests proclaiming these views were insincere. But preachers of this type were subconsciously pleasing to the moneyed lords, and were hired: so that a natural process of selection filled the pulpit with men trained to walk in the "paths of scriptural science and sound learning" — the same selective process by which pulpits in the South, in antebellum days, came to be occupied at last only by men who sincerely viewed slavery as a divinely ordained institution. Accordingly, Andreas of Magdeburg expounds: "Whoever would know the comet's real source and nature must not merely gape and stare at the scientific theory that it is an earthy, greasy, tough, and sticky vapour." By no means. For a comet is nothing other than "the thick smoke of human sins, rising every day, every hour, every moment, full of stench and horror, before the face of God, and becoming gradually so thick as to form a comet with curled and plaited tresses, which at last is kindled by the hot and fiery anger of the Supreme Heavenly Judge."

So sealed and ratified was the alliance between christianity and the master class, that the theology of the day regarded lords and princes as the special object of nature's attention; nature for instance sent a comet to foretoken the death of a prince. Goodman Scalinger essayed to expound it rationally: "Comets menace princes and

kings with death, because they live more delicately than other people; and therefore the air, thickened and corrupted by a comet, would be naturally more injurious to them than to common folk who live on common food." And Reinzer brings to it an even weightier anatomical lore, Says he: "Comets can indirectly, in view of their material, betoken wars, tumults, and the death of princes; for, being hot and dry, they bring the moistnesses in the human body to an extraordinary heat and dryness, increasing the gall; and, since the emotions depend on the temperature and condition of the body, men are through this change driven to violent deeds, quarrels, disputes, and finally to arms: especially is this the result with princes, who are more delicate and also more arrogant than other men and whose moistnesses are more liable to inflammation of this sort, inasmuch as they live in luxury and seldom restrain themselves from those things which, in such a dry state of the heavens, are especially injurious."

To which, good old Pierre Bayle, that upstanding and understanding democrat, made reply: "The more we study man, the more does it appear that pride is his ruling passion, and that he affects grandeur even in his misery. Mean and perishable creature that he is, he has been able to persuade men that he cannot die without disturbing the whole course of nature and obliging the heavens to put themselves to fresh expense in order to light his funeral pomp. Foolish and ridiculous vanity! If we had a just idea of the universe, we should soon comprehend that the death

or birth of a prince is too insignificant a matter to stir the heavens."

But the Peter Bayles were few. So that the masquerade went on full merrily. Pope Calixtus succeeded in excommunicating the comet, and made the church awe-struck thereby. So much so, that the good people of Thonon, afflicted by a plague of flies, set on foot a petition to the Sancte Pater Omnipotens, for a similiar relief. Spread on its municipal register we find: "Resolved that this town join with other parishes of this province in obtaining from Rome an excommunication against the insects, and that it will contribute pro rata to the expenses of the same." To which we are entitled to remark, that if Thonon and her neighbouring parishes had been willing to contribute a sufficient amount "to the expenses of the same," they could have obtained excommunications and decretals in any quantity desired.

Machiavelli blabbed the truth of it all. This Florentine was immeasurably impressed with the sagacity of Rome in prefixing the "Holy" to its title, and in strutting about in robes of sanctity. He sought to reduce this kind of statecraft to a science. Therefore he enumerated as traits which a prince should — "seem to" — have: "Charity, integrity, and humanity, all uprightness and all piety. And more than all else is it necessary for a prince to seem to possess the last quality." And he drives his point home: "It is not necessary for a prince to possess all the above mentioned qualities; but it is essential that he should at least seem to have them. I will even venture to say that to have and practise them

constantly is pernicious, but to seem to have them is useful."

In Malmesbury's chronicle, we find that the Machiavellian counsels were operative. In his description of Edgar, who signed himself, "King by the bountiful grace of God," we read: "The rigour of Edgar's justice was equal to the sanctity of his manners, so that he permitted no person, be his dignity what it might, to elude the laws with impunity. In his time there was no private thief, no public freebooter, unless such as chose to risk the loss of life for their attacks upon the property of others." By which was meant that the common people must not fish in the streams, or poach on the game preserves of the aristocracy, not even kill the game that destroyed their crops. Those game preserves had formerly been public land, the "commons," whereon the peasants had grazed their geese and the family cow. But the lords fenced in the commons as their private possession. And now, let a peasant be caught hunting there or fishing in the once public streams, and he was visited forthwith by "the rigour of Edgar's justice." Let it be indicated what that "rigour" for impious "attacks upon the property of others," was, remembering meanwhile that it could be for the offence of stealing a sheep for his starving family: The peasant found guilty was put to death, in order to warn his fellows of the heinousness of the crime. His eyes were put out, his ears torn off, his nostrils slit, and his hands and feet cut off; thereupon his scalp was torn from his head, and the peasant was left in this condition to be gnawed to death by the birds and beasts of prey. Through it all Edgar

preserved "the sanctity of his manners." We are a bit inclined to side with the peasants in their piteous plaint:

> The law makes that man a felon,
> Who steals a goose from the common;
> But leaves the greater felon loose,
> Who steals a common from the goose.

Our indictment therefore stands. The Roman Empire both before it took to itself the prefix "Holy" and afterward, was the same — an empire of human merchandise. Resting on an economic wrong, it felt its foundations rocking perilously beneath it. To preserve the unstable equilibrium and to allay its palpitations, the empire through its first thousand years kept the toiling masses intimidated by means of soldiery. Through its second thousand years it kept those toilers intimidated by means of "christianity." We have been taught to regard this second period as "the age of faith." But the pious phrase does not stand up beneath the inquisitorial gaze of to-day. Historical science in an age of democracy has a way of peering under the surface; and instead of an "age of faith," it sees the "Holy" Roman Empire as an age of exploitation — industrial slavery enforced by a ghostly terrorism. History is past economics; economics is present history. The Roman Empire, in its "Holy" as in its non-Holy period, was motived by one motive: the organized self-interest of the few perpetuating itself at the expense of the unorganized self-interest of the many.

The conclusion is irresistible: much of the history of theology shows it to have been a halter-weight on progress

— humanity has got forward with that millstone dragging at the bit. "The church," says Macaulay, "was the servile handmaid of monarchy, and the steady enemy of public liberty."

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter."

CHAPTER XVII

DEMOCRACY'S ULTIMATUM

Like individuals, institutions also upon crying out "remember not against me the sins of my youth," have a right to a new start. The church to-day is seeking to put away the badness and the sadness of so much of her past, and to get right once more with the working class. For that at present she sickens with a real sickness, is acknowledged by none more candidly than herself. "What must I do to be saved?" is her cry. A mood of self-diagnosis is upon her.

One set of her physicians propose exercise — the patient is not active enough. She has the machinery that is needful; all that is required is to run it at higher speed. A programme of more determined evangelism is proposed. The large and increasing multitude of the world's workers are not coming into the church; therefore she must go out and compel them to come in. "We must draw them into the gospel net." But the efforts of this school, though sincere, lack convincing power. The attempt has smacked of the artificial, the machine-made. Says one of the church leaders, himself a member of the revivalist wing and an ardent sympathizer: "The more recent type of evangelism retains few, if any, features of this older school, while it has certain unmistak-

able marks of its own. It is attended with extensive organization, elaborate preparation, expensive outlay, studied notoriety, display of statistics, newspaper advertising and systematic puffing, spectacular sensationalism, dramatic novelties." From which it is evident that emotional stampeding of the multitudes is not meeting with the success which stamps it as an elemental movement. There is a feel that the work of the christian today is to be something other than driving a gospel wagon.

Another set of physicians prescribe the institutional church, and departments of civic and social extension. These are being tried. But here also without signal success. The institutional church provides wholesome recreation for the young, and thereby is doing good. But it is proving powerless to unlock the interior chambers of the soul, where alone are the springs of power. As to ecclesiastically supervised civic and social bureaus, there is a something of amateurishness about them, and the suspicion of an ulterior motive. A "Department of Church and Labour" has to the working class a squint of evangelism by indirection. They see in these innovations the church still "fishing for men," but with the bait concealed now on a snell hook — the artifice of an angler grown skilled by failure.

So that the chasm between the church and industrialism is wide, and daily growing wider. On the one side we behold democracy sweeping forward with an elemental sweep, as though the stars in their courses were fighting for her — a sweep that is making no account of hemispheres or oceans; so that, were one to take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of

the sea, he would find there some presence of this mysteriously pervasive spirit. While on the other side of the chasm stands the church, gropingly putting out feelers toward this new-born force that is in the world, and giving unmistakable evidences of a retreat rather than of an advance.

The difficulty is, the church has not diagnosed her sickness deeply enough. The democracy's plaint against her is not against this or that detail in her makeup, but against the central fact which is at the heart of all of the churches to-day, even those that style themselves liberal — the fatherhood idea. Its quarrel is with that first-person-of-the-trinity doctrine, which the church has made the alphabet of all her thinking. For a paternal despotism flows copiously from that dogma. The democracy, even where it has not analyzed it out, feels subconsciously that benevolent absolutism is its arch foe. Therefore we find leaders of the social democracy stating openly and with uttermost stress that the idea of "God" — as they name this first person in the trinity — is the enemy which must be attacked first of all. Says one of them: "We open war upon God, because he is the greatest evil in the world." Still another: "God is dying without posterity; the terrestrial despot will drag down in his fall the celestial bugbear." Karl Marx — unless misreported — was equally explicit: "The idea of God must be destroyed; it is the corner-stone of a perverted civilization." And still another affirms: "The beginning of all those lies which have ground down the poor world in slavery, is God."

We have seen that this antagonism extends not to Jesus; for the Carpenter of Nazareth is becoming more popular with the working classes every day.

The antagonism of the democracy to the doctrine of the "first person of the trinity," though not clearly thought through in every case, falls largely into three classes: First, that the doctrine is unscriptural; second that it is untrue; third, that it makes for economic and political despotism.

As to the first, it is being conceded to-day by scholars— notably those of the Ritschlian school — that the idea of a Theos, an Absolute, a Creator calling the universe into being out of nothing, is not to be found in the Bible; it is a Greek rather than a Palestinian idea. The Semitic mind was practical, not metaphysical. It cared more for the goal toward which the world was tending, than for the source from which it had sprung. There is no word in the Hebrew language to mean the creation of something out of nothing.

It is true, there are in the scriptures many expressions implying direct divine intervention in the order of nature. But these references are to be interpreted in the light of their view of the cosmos as something small and mechanically operated. Jerusalem was the capital of the universe. To the Palestinian mind — and this was as true in the time of The Carpenter as before, and for a thousand years after him — the sky was a solid firmament a few miles above the earth, and supported by the corners of the earth, the "pillars of heaven." Atop thereof were "the waters which were above the firma-

ment," contained, as one commentator said, in a cistern shaped "like a bathing tank." This water fell down in the form of rain when "the windows of heaven" were opened. The sun was pulled across underneath the sky during the day; it was pushed into a pit at night; thereupon it was dragged around to the other side and pulled up in the morning. The stars were lamps hung out from the floor of heaven at night, and gathered in each morning—"the stars shall fall from heaven," was in that day easily understandable. Heaven was earth's upper story. Hell was the cellar. This is why the sailors with Columbus feared to voyage too far beyond the Pillars of Hercules, lest they come to the edge of the world and pitch headlong. We see it also in Dante: "Why is the sun so red in the evening?" "Because he looketh down upon hell." References in scripture, therefore, to divine control over this piece of mechanism called nature—such as, "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"— are more comparable to man's growing mastery of nature through the methods of modern science, than they are to the notion of divine wizard-work imbedded in the theology which has come to us from Greek metaphysics.

Christianity on its westward way from Palestine had to cross the land of Greece. In so doing it absorbed the idea of God as a Theos, an Absolute, the First Cause. The democracy is suspicious of the motives that were back of this transformation. Under Palestine's low-arching sky, God and the people were but a few miles apart. This sense of physical nearness had bred a sense of personal nearness, which was distinctly bad for the purposes

of the exploiter. It may be set down as a mathematical formula: Human servitude is in proportion to the interval between man and God, increasing as the square of the distance.

The tower of Babel narrative is pertinent. "A tower whose top may reach unto heaven" — there is the measure of the size of the universe back in Bible times. This discount must always be computed in reading both the Old and New Testaments. It shocked no one in his day, therefore, when Jesus pictured the lord of heaven as "Father Abraham." "Abraham is our father," was the word of pious Jews everywhere. Jesus himself felt poignantly his ancestral connection, and used fondly the pronoun "my" in referring to this father in heaven. The popular term, even now, "Abraham's Bosom," by which to designate heaven as a whole, is scriptural through and through. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law I said, Ye are gods?" Jesus was not a theist. Writes Harnack: "The picture of the life and discourses of Jesus, stands in no relation with the Greek spirit. That he was ever in touch with Plato or the Porch is absolutely impossible to maintain." To those who loved him, it seemed no sacrilege on the part of The Carpenter when he assumed the godhead. Earth and heaven were so close together in Palestine in that day that a man of vigorous spirit could be thought of as stepping from one to the other without putting the imagination out of joint. From Jacob's Ladder, in Genesis—see also the narrative of Elijah ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire—clear through to John's vision on Patmos wherein he saw

heaven opening to him like a curtain or scroll rolled back — the Bible as a whole cannot be understood except by taking the Tower of Babel as a measuring rod wherewith to compute the then psychological distance between earth and sky.

Therefore the democracy to-day, in rejecting the Greek interpolation of the trinity and its metaphysical subtleties into the christian system, believes that it is building on strictest Biblical science. In taking The Carpenter-christ as its only God, it does not feel itself to be atheistic, but rather to be placing itself in the same spiritual atmosphere in which the Bible folk lived, and in which that book was written — the atmosphere furthermore in which christianity was cradled. Jesus — the father, son, and holy ghost; there is a theology acceptable to the democracy; and it is a theology founded on exact scriptural science. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Not only does the democracy to-day believe the "first person of the trinity" idea to be unbiblical. In the second place it believes it to be untrue. The universe does not show evidence of operating in a fatherly fashion. They who think by prayer and ritual to change the course of the elements, think foolishly. Nature cares naught for man. Her terrific forces crush saint and sinner with serene impartiality. That man has lived shelteredly who has not been out in some night storm wherein he

has exclaimed, as was exclaimed to Lear: "Here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools." Nature coddles no one. Her hand is red with millions of years of murder — enough of crimson to incarnadine all the seas of eternity. A Galveston flood sticks out its tongue against an entire city and licks it flat; and the inundation devours the good as well as the bad. The lightnings turn not aside for church buildings. Tornadoes are not immoral — they are unmoral. The Iroquois fire in Chicago, dealing out undiscriminating destruction, has put many a once placid mind to serious query. Probably the Messina earthquake broke up the theological placidity of even a greater number.

Says one wrestler, face to face with the Messina puzzle: "Did God by a special act of will choose to push the sliding of the earth's crust along a fault which he had purposely created along a strait between Etna and Stromboli, close by two populous cities, which he knew men would build; and did he choose to have the earthquake come just when the inhabitants were in their beds, and when the destruction of life would be greatest, just when and where it would do the greatest evil? That is not easy to believe. It is easier to believe that the good God does and must govern his universe by stable laws. Then can God interrupt the course of nature to accommodate us, or in answer to our weak and inconsistent prayers? If not, where goes the doctrine of special providence? Here are more antinomies than we can explain." Another wrestler, who had formerly stood as a leader of the modern theistic school, is compelled by the Messina event to exclaim: "The chris-

tian is an agnostic. He does not attempt to solve the riddle of the universe." Messina confronts the theistic wing of christian doctrine with an uncomfortable alternative; because their Absolute, being all-powerful, was able to have averted the Messina earthquake had he so wished; or else he did not wish to avert it; in which case, why the murder of hundreds, many of whom knew not their right hand from their left? Avoiding Scylla, they run upon Charybdis. Upon the horns of that dilemma, the theistic school is left. Homer by the way, located his Scylla and Charybdis precisely at the straits of Messina, where the mariner is beset on one side by the whirling tide, and on the other by the jagged rocks of the coast. "In sober truth," exclaims Mill, "nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are nature's every-day performance." So that intelligent theists to-day admit their despair of explaining the catastrophies of nature — emulating herein the resignation of the Hindus, who regard the presence of the English in their country as, "uncomfortable, unaccountable works of God." Theism has been reduced to "A Grand Perhaps."

The democracy's view of the universe is free from these intellectual bafflements. Its god is The Carpenter, who is the commander of the world's workers in their march of conquest over nature. The fight to subjugate the universe is a real fight. The casualties attest it. Industrial accidents — half a million killings every year; workmen tattooed with scars! — these give it the look of a real battle-field. However, man is not alone in the fight; therefore he endures the tug and strain.

It is of infinite comfort to the industrial army to have One as their leader who was himself an industrialist. He is a worker along with the workers, a sufferer with the sufferers, a rejoicer with the rejoicers. Humanity's march across the centuries is a Via Dolorosa; but One is marching with the marchers, and leaves some of his blood also in the footprints. He is a fellow striver. Nature is not subdued; but she is subduable. And that is all that brave men require. The chaos in front is as yet unmapped. But with the Great Companion, man has heart for the journey. There is no road ahead. But road-making is humanity's vocation. The fact that his feet are treading where no feet have trod, gives zest to the traveller, the zest of discovery, the joy of exploration; there is tingle as one climbs a peak in Darien. Nature is civilization's raw material. She is a wild horse as yet unbacked, and gives its tamer many a bruise. But, better so than a horse that will stand without hitching. Man is not nature's darling. Nature will yield only to one stronger than she; and a chain bit will be needed to the end — they who think to ride her on the snaffle ride for a fall.

> Stark was ever the sea,
> But our ships were yet more stark.

Only as an eternity of conquest can the prospect of life in endless duration have charm for red-blooded folk. It is here that Milton's art failed — he was unable to make heaven interesting. But his Satan is interesting — the reader finds him a magnetic personality. And for this reason: the heaven against which Milton's

Satan revolts is abysmally dull, an eternity of do-nothingness, presided over by a do-nothing Absolute. Wrote Richard Wagner: "That God was doomed by art. Jehovah in the fiery bush, or even the reverend Father with the snow-white beard who looked down from out the clouds in blessing on his Son, could say but little to the believing soul, however masterly the artist's hand." When christianity was transformed into a religion for the sabbath day only — the note of industrialism lost out of it — her notion of heaven became sabbatarian likewise: "Every day will be Sunday by and by." Its heaven is one long liturgical service. A choir of white-robed, elderly men singing hymns, would become a bit bromidic after a few weeks. No hotter hell is thinkable than to spend eternity in a place that is uninteresting.

There is an increasing conviction among trained intellects that the Whence of the infinite and eternal energy out of which the universe has been spun, is by its very nature shrouded from knowledge. To-day the foundations of the earth are indeed being discovered; but they are economic foundations. Not the world's Whence but the world's Whither, is man's concern. We have the universe on our hands. The workingman instinct everywhere is to take nature as raw material, and dominate it into some form of use and beauty. A suppliant attitude toward the cosmos, such as is preached by theism, is deemed by the world's workers unmanful. Work people live at close grips with the powers of nature. The daily tug and wrestle have disciplined them to look those powers in the face. Nature is the legitimate field

for the play of man's instinctive combativeness and battle ardour. He is called upon to turn toward her a countenance of confident mastership, unblenched by superstitious fears. Man to-day is peering to the flaming wall of the universe, and he is finding naught anywhere which may not be mastered by a man who is master of himself. Theism is a religion fundamentally of cravenness and supplication: but democracy is the religion of man's communal mastership over nature — a mastership, moreover, that cannot know any last outpost of perfection. For the universe is never adult; it is always adolescent. Its evolutionary potencies can never be exhausted.

But the democracy rejects the "first person of the trinity" idea for still a third reason, namely, that it makes for despotism. That the idea is unscriptural, coming not from Palestine but from the outworn imaginations of Greek metaphysics, would tell weightily against it. That it is also untrue — theism a freak of the imagination — would tell more damagingly still. But that it plays direct into the hands of the exploiting class is an indictment most damnatory of all: it is her entanglement with theism that has given to christianity her fatal warp and bias toward an aristocratic scheme of things.

The democracy supports this third count in the indictment with many proofs. We have seen that theology has an economic basis. Religious doctrine is not something that can be kept in an air-tight compartment and isolated from the world of affairs — its very isolation in that case makes it powerfully operative on the life of

the world by withdrawing from that life many who would otherwise have participated in it. A religion that sits loose to the drama of daily life does not cease thereby to have a part — even though but a comedy part — in that drama. Theology has a way of translating itself into economic magnitudes, and this is particularly so with the most stupendous doctrine that ever sought to impose itself upon the human mind — the doctrine, namely, that the physical universe is ruled over by a personage who created it, owns it, and personally runs it. Put a boss at the top of the universe, and the idea of bossism will trickle down into every human relationship. Subserviency to an absolute ruler in the skies, how beneficent soever that ruler may be, paves the way for subserviency to an absolute ruler upon earth. For it puts a crook in the knee and a habitude of dependence in the soul, which is fatal to that upstanding type of man which democracy requires. On the other hand a fraternal relationship between God and man, in which the former is man's elder brother, is an education in self-respect, and makes an earthly despot impossible. This is why the Bible, motived as it was by democratism — that is, by self-respect — stressed the likeness between God and man; they are both in the same image. God is portrayed as only a man of larger, wiser frame. "Come now, and let us reason together," is his way of addressing man; and, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee." "Thy God hath commanded thy strength." "I have not called you servants; I have called you friends." But when christianity was annexed by the Roman Empire, this elder-brother attitude

was done away. Modelling after Rome's idea of the absoluteness of the emperor, God was pictured as a parental tyrant, issuing ipse dixits and responsible only to himself.

The claim has been sweatingly stressed that the idea of the common fatherhood of God is a promoter of human brotherhood. But the sweat has not fertilized an abundant crop in the shape of convincement. "The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man!" — a sonorous non sequitur. Offspring of the same parent have not displayed everywhere and always a brotherly spirit. On the contrary, there is no quarrel like a family quarrel. The feud of all feuds most vitriolic is a feud between blood brothers. One brought up under a parent of the stand-offish, the awe-inspiring, the benign sort, adopts the same paternal attitude toward his fellows; with the result, infinite divisions. On the other hand, a parent who throws off the paternal attitude, and becomes an elder brother toward his offspring, succeeds in begetting the same brother spirit in them; and the breach in the people is healed. Alphonse Daudet was a big brother to his boy and an attachment arose between them which is one of the beautiful scenes of all time. The rule obtains; the paternal relation, divine or human, is a divisive force; but fraternalism is a cement everywhere. It was not by accident that the most consistent development of the "father" idea took place in Rome, whose name is synonymous with despotism. For the two are one. Her patrician class coveted to hold toward the common people the stand-apart relationship. Therefore they called themselves the "fathers" of the people

— "paternal," pater, patrician. They "patronized" the plebs. It is needless to add that their "guardianship" of the people came to have a strong smell — so much so, in fact, that tribunes had to be instituted to protect the plebs from their constitutional "fathers." There has been no state in which the "father" idea was more thorough-goingly worked out than Rome; and no state was more absolutist over the people. Her law gave to the father the power of life and death over his family. And it was the development of this "father" spirit which made the Roman Empire the most deliberate and aggressive despotism known in the chronicles of man.

In every society there will be the wise and the unwise, the firm and the unfirm; and there will ever be need for the wise and the firm to bring their strength to bear upon the unwise and unfirm segment of the population. But all that is worth while in this relationship of helpfulness is conserved in the elder-brother attitude. What goes beyond this is not helpfulness but something else, a hankering to use those younger brothers for private ends. No person ever lived who needed a father over him; but all need an elder brother over them. A democratic organization of society would have afforded Rome's wiser set full opportunity for serviceableness to the less favoured members of the state. But serviceableness was not the organizing principle of Rome's patriciate. Those "conscript fathers" were swayed by the prides of life — pride of power, pride of opinion, pride of place. They developed the "patron" idea, because it gave them a position above and on the backs

of the people. Fatherhood! — with Rome once entered upon that terrific pathway, a course beyond all turning, there was but one terminus ahead — a Tiberius, a Nero, a Caligula. For the patricians, separated from the people by that artificial, "pater" distinction, drew off by themselves into irresponsible power, self-gratification, moral rot. The plebs also, bereaved of self-respect by this "patronizing" relationship, drifted from manliness and self-reliance; they came to accept bounty from their patrons, and licked the hand that fed them. Rome became a state of rulers and rabble, both equally miserable, equally ignoble. The patron — pater — relationship is bad at both ends, hardening the patronizer and softening the patronized. When the Roman Empire, by its annexation of christianity, became "holy," its sovereign saw the possibilities which are in that "pater" idea for purposes of oppression; therefore he styled himself the "papa" of the people. And the Czar — Cæsar — of Russia to this day cherishes the nickname, "Little Father."

A benevolent tyrant is the worst tryant, for he makes the tyranny endurable. Because philanthropic absolutism has been exalted into a theological system and exerts its seductions upon the mind of the people from the very go-cart, there is noticeable to-day a resurgence of favour toward the idea of a despotism motived by good intentions. Under the forms of freedom, a feudalism quite as complete as in the days of the barons is threatened. A retainer of the modern seigniorial system refers to the lowly, "whose welfare is more thoroughly conserved when governed than when governing." The

string is being so persistently harped that even the elect are seduced, and we hear from the lips of one of them: "Theoretically, absolutism may be the best government": which, to the democracy, is the heresy of heresies. Theoretically and actually, absolutism is the worst government. And the better it is, the worse it is for humanity. Absolutism presupposes intense activity on the part of a few, and passivity on the part of the many. The consciousness of subjection to an irresponsible power, how benign soever that power may be, tells fatally on self-respect, and therefore on human achievement. That only can help a man which stings him to self-help. Man's redemption must grow up from below, and cannot be handed down to him from some patronizing hand above. If benevolent despotism were the acme of political development, Julius Cæsar would be the world's christ and saviour. For he was benevolent. In personal character he was of almost feminine refinement; so much so that he found himself ill at ease among the coarse convivialities of his male associates, and preferred the society of women — to the delectation of the scandal-mongers of the day, so that in posterity's appraisal his private morals have suffered a degree of taint which does not seem borne out by the facts. He was essentially a student and an artist. Of delicate sensibility, his life ideals during his formative period were predominatingly æsthetic— to reform the popular festivals of Rome into lines of beauty, and to improve the architecture of her public buildings. He was of a kindly temperament. Journeying once with Oppius through a forest, they came at night to a hut where was only one bed; Oppius being

unwell, Cæsar gave up the bed to him, and slept out on the ground. The strain of office was so gruelling on his sensitively organized nature, that toward the end he showed symptoms of epilepsy, that sign of the destruction of the nervous system. Too heavy for mortal man is the robe of omnipotence. Before his death he had been heard often to remark that he had lived long enough. His defence against the assassins was but half-hearted, and he seems almost to have invited those three-and-twenty wounds under Pompey's statue — he was too fine grained to enjoy domination over his fellows. His bust in the Louvre, the face hugely furrowed with wrinkles, is that of a man in utter exhaustion — a life burned out by a voltage higher than the human nerves are wired to carry.

Cæsar used the enormous powers of the dictatorship beneficently. He reformed the calendar, sought to restore the wasted population of Italy, founded the first public library in Rome, made improvements in the State, and at the time of his death was planning to drain the Pontine marshes and pierce the Isthmus of Corinth. The world has not witnessed such another blend of absolutism and benevolence. Nevertheless under him a human deterioration took place. He governed so well that the people lost desire for government. There was a decay of political energies. Whilst he was breaking under the strain, those who had been aforetime citizens were softening into pulp, each on pleasure bent, the old Roman fibre rotted out of them. The people were conquered and content. And dark days set in for humanity, from which it has not yet recovered.

Kings recognize the leverage which a theology of benevolent despotism puts into their hands. The existence of a fatherly monarch in the heavens would, if provable, give a divine right to fatherly monarchs on earth. It is with insight, therefore, that kings sign themselves, "defenders of the faith," meaning by "faith" the christian religion as transformed by the Roman Empire; they know that if they can defend that faith, the faith will defend them. Jefferson, Franklin, and the other leaders of the American Revolution were insurgent against the king, and they were equally insurgent against this "christianity"; but the Tories, bitter against democracy and strong for the king, were also in large part active and zealous churchmen. Slavery in the South found one of its stoutest defenders in Buchanan — Buchanan perhaps the most aggressively orthodox believer and churchman who ever sat in the White House. Whereas the one who came after him, and who wrote the document emancipating the slaves, paired with Jefferson and Franklin in living his religious life outside of the church and outside of orthodoxy. An anthracite king has recently made an application of theistic theology to the industrial situation. (His angered fellow-barons have likened his frankness to that of a blabbing idiot; but his words were not those of an idiot; they were words rather of cool and close logic, following out to its faithful conclusion the doctrine of divine paternalism taught him by the church.) Said he: "The rights and interests of the labouring man will be protected and cared for not by the labour agitators, but by the christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom

has given the control of the property interests of the country." Nor should mere man presume to question the evident favouritism of this deity, for "its judgments are unsearchable and its ways past finding out." Not jocosely, but with reverence and almost with literal sincerity, the industrial barons take up their parable and exult: The Lord is my partner, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my reputation. He leadeth me in the paths of big philanthropies for my name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of labour strikes and revolution, I will fear no evil. For thou art with me. Thy church and thy priesthood, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of starving enemies. Thou anointest my tongue with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely homage and flattery shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in a big tomb hereafter.

This is why Darwinism, wresting as it does scientific support from the idea of a "God the father almighty," and explaining the universe without him, has been heralded by the democracy as a deliverer and a prophet. Said Karl Marx: "Nothing ever gives me greater pleasure than to have my name thus linked onto Darwin's. His wonderful work makes my own absolutely impregnable. Darwin may not know it, but he belongs to the Social Revolution." So much has the proletariat hailed Darwin with joy, that one of the leaders of orthodoxy deplores the "horrible plaudits" which "have accompanied every effort to establish man's brutal descent." It is noticeable that the opposition to Darwinism has

come in large part from the champions of the existing economic order. Carlyle is the defender of the Roman ideal — autocracy, fist government. He placed a Viking marauder above Washington and Lincoln. He saw in the American Civil War only "the burning out of a foul chimney." It is significant, therefore, that Carlyle coupled Darwin in the same anathema, styling him the "apostle of dirt worship." Writes Monseigneur Ségur also: "These infamous doctrines [Darwin's] have for their only support the most abject passions. Their father is pride, their mother impurity, their offspring revolutions." Russia too has discovered the levelling tendency of Darwin's negation of "the father almighty." Wherefore her police, directed thereto by the authorities, refused to the University of Kief permission to take note of the centennial of Charles Darwin, on the grounds of "religious objections to the Darwinian theory." Thereupon Russia's "Little Father" proceeds to shoot down 2,195 unarmed work people who were approaching him with a petition for help in their miseries.

Not strange, therefore, that the democracy has come to regard, "God the father almighty" as the rich man's creed, and will be satisfied only with its erasement from the page. It is for this reason that the so-called "Christian Socialism" failed to grip the work class. With an intense human throb and a martyr spirit, the movement under Maurice and Kingsley nevertheless did not enlist to any large degree the hand workers; because, with all of its ardency of social passion, that movement had for its intellectual foundation the orthodox doctrine of a heavenly despot. And this neutralized all its effort.

Its leaders pleaded for a socialized humanity, in which was to be naught save brotherhood. But, back of all their pleading, back of all their schemes of fraternity, loomed the figure of a benevolent sovereign in the skies, giving to benevolent sovereigns upon earth a sanction highestly authoritative. The wage earners subconsciously detected this note in the preaching. They came a few times to church, sought to find the social redemption they longed for, failed to find it, and came not again.

In the churches to-day is many a preacher aflame with social passion; and his heart is breaking because the work people, whom he loves with a genuine love, whose side he espouses with a genuine espousal, come not to his church. The explanation is that, even where he has been trained in so called "liberal" theology, he has been taught to believe that "the father almighty" is the sine qua non of christianity. So that the wage people behold in him merely one more of the patrician — the pater — class, seeking to add more parentalism to backs that are already patronized to the point of breaking. The heart break must go on, the gulf between worshippers and workers must widen, the alienation of labour from the church must continue, until the church awakes to the fact that alterations in this or that detail of her thought structure are not enough. At the fountain head of christianity to-day stands fatherly absolutism in the heavens. And that colours every activity of the church to their remotest reaches — as an ore bed at the head of a stream discolours the river a thousand miles away, no matter how purely it may have flowed after it got way from the ore bed. There must be fundamental

democracy in the godhead itself. Not until then will the working class come back into the church.

These then are the three counts in the indictment which the democracy to-day is bringing against the idea of a fatherly creator and ruler of the universe: First, that it is unbiblical, and was a "devised fable" craftily interpolated into the christian system by Greek metaphysicians at the behest of their Roman overlords. Second, that it is untrue, because the forces of nature do not operate on any basis of personal intelligence and kindliness; they are brute powers which are not to be prayed unto but are to be mastered. Third, that it is immoral, inasmuch as it presents to fundamental democracy the opposition of fundamental absolutism. And the last is the most damnatory count in the indictment.

A religion can exist after it has been found to be unbiblical. It can even struggle on after it has become untrue. But it cannot continue after it has been found to be immoral. The tidal drift away from the church means much. But there is setting in to-day a tidal drift against the church, and that means vastly more, particularly as that tidal sweep includes to-day some of the noblest enthusiasms of our time. When once conscience has been enlisted against a church, that church is doomed. The religion of the classic world was able to keep going after it had lost its power of producing martyrs. But when, on a stream of passion that came surging forth from Nazareth, martyrs were raised up against that religion, its hour had struck. The democracy to-day believes with all its soul and heart and mind and strength

that paternal despotism in the heavens is the begetter of paternal despotisms upon earth; that the church's theology was made in an age of aristocracy, by the paid retainers of the aristocracy, and in the interests of aristocracy. Therefore the democracy is putting conscience in its fight against this "spiritual wickedness," and is saying in the words of an aforetime warrior against wrong: "We shall doe God and our country true service by taking away this evil."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE INDUSTRIAL COMRADE

MALMESBURY tells of a prodigy, two women joined together from birth. "At last, one dying, the other survived, and the living carried about the dead for the space of three years, till she died also, through the fatigue of the weight and the stench of the dead carcass."

The ligature woven by the Græco-Roman philosophers, conjoining The Carpenter with the idea of a paternal despot in heaven, threatens, unless the two can be severed, to cause a similar fatality. For the speculations of Greek metaphysics are dead. The scientific view of the universe, discovered by modern research and increasingly accepted by the modern world, is in polar opposition to the laboured mysticisms of Plato and the Platonists. Science is an august thing; it is taught to-day in the schools, is preached by the universities, and is the organizing principle in modern industry. A belated bishop here and there may issue a prayer for rain; but he is no longer taken seriously. The theistic school, driven to the wall, unable longer to defend its theory of a personal intelligence back of the forces of nature, is resorting to obscurantism — is fighting a slow retreat, or lapsing into sullen silence. The divine despotism is dead. The danger is lest the Carpenter of Galilee, conjoined to that partner, may

also be dragged down, "through the fatigue of the weight and the stench of the dead carcass."

A section of the proletary class to-day is showing a trend away from the spiritual foundations of life and into a pronounced secularism. These have never seen the Nazareth Workingman in his real aspect, as the industrial leader of the industrialists of the world. They have accepted the portrait of him as it was repainted by the theologians of the Roman Empire — a representative of the cæsarized sovereignty in the heavens. Therefore they are stripping themselves of religion of every kind — they regard any leanings toward a spiritual view of life as evidence either of outworn superstition, or of a covert sympathy with the master and proprietary class.

If this trend were to grow, if the social movement were to be lopped away from its holdfast in religion, that movement would receive therein its death mark. For democracy is an enthusiasm or it is nothing. To divorce it from faith leaves a mutilated thing, devoid of beauty and stamina. A propaganda, to succeed, must have within it the driving power of a great emotion. Religion is the premier force in human life, and always will be; for it changes the verb from the subjunctive to the imperative. Democracy in its essence is not a movement away from religion: it is a movement toward a truer and higher religion. The calm clear thinking of the schools is powerless to effect social alterations: it must be emotionalized. Logic is like sunshine in winter, full of light but freezing. It is only when the earth swings near to the sun that there takes place the upheaval and resurrection of the springtide. "Not a revolution in Europe but there has been

a monk back of it," is perhaps an overstatement. But there resides a soul of truth in the proverb. Faith touched with passion — that has been in every age the great social dynamic. For the democracy to leave the religious area to the exploiter and privileged class, would be a tactical blunder of the first magnitude. Let me write a nation's religion, and I care not who writes her laws.

Said Mazzini: "Great social transformations have never been and never will be other than the application of a religious principle, of a moral development, of a strong and active faith. On the day when democracy shall elevate itself to the position of a religious party it will carry away the victory, not before"; and again: "The religious question pursues me like a remorse; it is the only one of any real importance." Richard Whiteing speaks to the same theme: "Democracy is a religion or nothing, with its ritual, its ceremonies, its cenobites, its government as a church — above all, its organized sacrifice of the altar, the sacrifice of self. This is the deepest craving of human nature. All attempts to sacrifice man's heroism to his interests have ever failed. His goodness must make him smart." Where social interest has no rootage in religion, it is a precarious and fragile thing. "Nothing has struck me more," bitterly exclaims a leader of the democratic ideal, "than the short life of social enthusiasm. We have had thousands of examples." The Carpenter foresaw this. Zeal, if it has no roots, is a short lived thing; it will parch at the first drought. He pointed this, in his parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. Where there is a spiritual reinforcement, social en-

thusiasm has a reserve of fuel to draw upon, like the five who "took oil in their vessels with their lamps." The five foolish ones took no oil. At the critical time they perceived, "our lamps are going out"; and there was no source at hand from which to obtain fresh supplies.

In the democracy's reaction against the other-worldiness and quietism of the church, there is danger lest it go to the other extreme — a materialism untempered by spiritual ideas and ideals. The one narrowness would be as lop-sided as the other. Man is an earth animal. The church forgot that, and went off into mystic altitudes where the air is too rarefied for health. On the other hand, man is more than an earth animal; and any attempt to frame a system of society based "on bread alone," has in it no seeds of permanency. The democracy points, and with justice, to the dulness of the church's view of life and the hereafter — self-effacement in this world, and orchestra practice in the next. But a socialized materialism would be equally uninteresting — a monotonous level of mediocrity, everybody conventional, slaves to a dull reputability. There are three destroyers of the human spirit: fear of death, fear of poverty, and fear of public opinion. Of these, fear of public opinion is chief. Above all else, democracy needs individuals who shall refuse to be absorbed in the mass. She threatens to a customary life, a shallow plebeianism of the spirit. No yoke so galling as the yoke of that brainless tyrant, Public Opinion; no espionage of a Herod or a Nero so inquisitorial as her espionage. Who shall stand up against her? Who shall be equal to the maddening solitude of life on the moral frontier? Who shall tread the

wine press alone? Only they within whom are the fountain deeps where the drained cup of life is refilled. Religion fortifies that inner preserve of personality, and thus makes radio-active spirits possible.

It is here that The Carpenter is the proletariat's lord by divinest right. For he is on the one hand the keeper of the floodgates of enthusiasm; and on the other he directs that flood into channels of worldly use, of social transformation. It is this combination of the two traits in rarest blend, which gives him the easy preëminence and makes him the christ — humanity's anointed one. Other leaders there have been, with as lofty a spiritual vision as he; but they lacked the economic approach; therefore they were boats with much sail and little ballast, at the mercy of the gusts of fanaticism and rhapsody. Likewise there have been upheavers of despotism, economic reconstructors, as energetic as he; but they have lacked his hold in the unseen world, where alone are the hidings of power; and so, like laden boats without sail or towage, they have hung inert — water-logged derelicts on the tide. The abnormal poise of The Carpenter whilst treading dizziest altitudes of the spirit, marks him out as the God-man; for he is at home in both worlds.

The Carpenter of Nazareth is the democracy's chief asset; to suffer themselves to be defrauded of their birthright in him, were criminal negligence. He is the greatest arouser of the masses which human annals have recorded. "He stirreth up the people," is his biography in five words. "This child shall be for the falling and rising again of many," said one, when the babe was still in swaddling clothes. His footprints through Palestine

were dragons' teeth, raising up a harvest of armed souls, helmeted for warrior work. Gifted with vision into the world of the unseen, he enlisted all the powers of that unseen world on the side of the disinherited. His theology had an inflammatory purpose. His ethics was the ethics of self-respect, a brand of ethics which is the destroyer of servitude and the begetter of freedom in every age and under every sky. He identified himself with the proletariat, those a-hungered, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and in prison — "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." He lived their life, he died their death. And those pierced hands to-day are lifting empires off their hinges.

By holding with Jesus, the democracy obtains the momentum of the centuries. Historic continuity is of incalculable advantage. Had the Sturm und Drang period in Europe a century ago identified itself with the stream of democracy which issues from Galilee, it might have been other than a fire in straw, and the world had been saved the reaction that followed, lasting seven decades. From the summit of twenty centuries Jesus overleans the democracy to-day, and is ambitious to reinforce it with ancestral wisdom and the might of the martyrs. It is no small advantage to the social movement that it can claim as its lord him who redated the calendar. The springs of modern democracy are in Nazareth. A movement is powerful to the extent that it has back of it the push of the centuries. History is the key to futurity.

The democracy needs Jesus to stiffen it against surrender and self-betrayal. He was an irreconcilable.

He knew the devious windings of the seigniorial mind, whereby it seeks to blind the people to the oppressions which it is fastening upon them. Then as now its method was to wring tribute from a whole province, build a temple out of a part of the spoil, and ostentatiously present it to the people to attest the magnanimity of the donor: "They sound a trumpet, that they may be seen of men." Herod was a past master in this art. His show of generosity was deceiving many. But Jesus saw in those gifts morsels of meat thrown to watch dogs to keep them quiet; and he cautioned the proletariat: "Beware of the leaven of Herod." The imposing Temple in Jerusalem was his work. Herod announced that he was building it in order to promote the religious welfare of the people. Josephus informs us, however, that his real purpose was to raise for himself an everlasting memorial. Superficially its grandeur was impressive. It was built of white marble. Its eastern front was covered with plates of gold which threw back the rays of the rising sun. Some of its foundation stones were of vast size, each representing the labour of a host of men. And this building, the "gift" of a man who blended in his own person the vices of the East and the tyrannous cruelty of the West, was become the official headquarters of the religion of the once proud-spirited Jews.

Jesus as a boy of twelve was found in this Temple of Herod's, amid a group of the priestly parasites of that king. The narrative states that the boy was "asking them questions." We are not left in doubt as to the sort of questions he was asking, for as man he comes back to the subject. The Temple was still building, and Jesus

on his last visit to Jerusalem heard in it the sound of hammer and chisel. This "leaven of Herod" was doing its pestiferous work — the grandeur of the structure was dazzling the populace. Even the disciples were under the glamour of it, so seductive is despotism's ostentatious charity, so subtle is its power to put the soul in a trance. Jesus therefore cautioned them: "Take heed lest any man deceive you." He enforced the lesson by pointing to "the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings; but she of her penury." Even then his disciples were not altogether convinced; something of a controversy upon the subject seems to have set in. For, "his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the Temple: Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here." Here at least, they argue, is an example of a man of wealth who is also a benefactor. But the Irreconcilable One refuses to be dazzled by this "manner of stones." He perceives that those imposing walls rest upon a foundation of economic injustice. Therefore they shall not stand: "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." And in five and thirty years it was so. The Carpenter's principle was that no man's personal force has a right to impede the personal force of another. A man, therefore, who climbs to wealth and power over the backs of his fellows, cannot atone for that social wrong by philanthropies. Said he: "The

kings of the gentiles exercised lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called 'sweet lords.' But ye shall not be so."

A leader of that uncompromising democratism is needed to-day. "The System," with its glitter and gilding, housed in imposing structures, served by high-salaried retainers, is a very soul stealer. Its subtle influence snares the spirit and invades the stoutest heart. Only under The Carpenter — he who did not know how to spare a despot — will there a day dawn when "the vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful." Many in the ranks of the democracy itself are animated by no high motives. Goaded by the sheer urgency of livelihood, they are concerned but with their own advancement — which achieved, they turn their backs on former comrades. Some of the railroad operatives to-day are illustrating this trend — a willingness to advance their own interests irrespective of their brother proletarians. An Arab slave is prompted by no vision of the righteousness and beauty of freedom. His ambition is to climb up out of slavery, and then to own a slave for himself. "But the liberal deviseth liberal things."

It is not difficult to show that this spirit of "Each for himself," is the spirit of cæsarisms and sultanisms everywhere, the spirit that has immemorially crushed the aspirations of labour. Were it to prevail, were the sense of industrial solidarity to be lost, despotism would again make headway. For this heritage of liberty is not a free gift. So far as it has been obtained, it has been wrenched from the master class by the fist of a united proletariat. Let this solidarity re-granulate

into particles, and those operatives who are climbing into the sunlight over the backs of their fellows would be thrust back into the same servitude into which they thought to leave their fellows. Against this abandonment of freedom as a principle, against this ignoble acquiescence in oppression — provided it oppresses only the other person — The Carpenter was in utter opposition. His plea was for solidarity, and against the strifes and selfishness that rend the popular cause and make it impotent. He would inject principle into the upward strivings of the disinherited. The masses, armed with conscience and reinforced by the Irreconcilable Leader, would be stiffened to fight the fight until judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Once again, the democracy needs this Leader as a controller of the bestial that is in the workingman as in every other child of earth. The sting of flesh is no respecter of persons. It works its melancholy havoc of freedom in the house of toil as in the palace of ease. No fact is more established by history, than that a certain "virtue," a personal cleansing, issues forth from contact with The Nazarene. He "knew what was in man." Therefore, in proclaiming self-government, he put the accent quite as strongly on the "government" as on the "self." For government must be. If it is not by the self, then it will be done by another for him. The only freedom from tyrannous control from the outside, is tyrannous control by the man himself on the inside. There are signs that some of the liberty that has been won for the people is going off into wantonness. A

generation of happy hooligans, each on pleasure bent, would impress no deep footprints upon the centuries. A proletary revolution, were it to mean an oligarchy of the base, an enthronement of the bestial and sub-human, would carry in it the seeds of its own dissolution. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. Dante located freedom at the top of the Mount of Discipline. In the record of the liberation from the brick-yards of Egypt, we read that Moses, straightway he had the people out of Goshen, led them into the gorges of Sinai, where amid the thunder-storms of that region he gave them the moral law, without which can be no enduring liberty; thus the rule of the Egyptian was replaced in them by the arm of an interior restraint, and the people went forward. Democracy to-day has reached a point where it need fear no foe outside. Her danger is a moral breakdown. The people who inherit freedom need of all peoples to live their life under the glare of his eye who said, "if thy right hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off and cast it from thee; it is better for thee." The true christian is a rebel; but he is a beneficent rebel. He is not less obedient than other people, but more obedient. He rebels against some human law, out of reverence for a higher law which the human law was violating.

The modern age is the age of the city; and it is in such an age that The Carpenter feels most at home. Palestine in his day was thickly inhabited. The nation had passed out of a pastoral and agricultural society, into the more advanced life of the city. So that we find Jesus addressing his message to a people living in a complicated society like our own. He spent his days in the midst

of a crowd. The Jewish nature has ever been one of sociability; its ideal is not isolation and the desert, but "a city of habitation." The rare occasions in which Jesus was alone, are marked out for mention. Some of his followers in after years, misreading his character, regarded the city as an artificial product and sought the devout life by means of retirement — a cloistered christianity. But such was not The Carpenter. His gospel is a social gospel. His ideal is the civic ideal. Its goal is "the holy city descending from God out of heaven." Therefore the Carpenter-christ is the fit leader of the multitudinous To-day and of the increasingly multitudinous To-morrow. For the city is going to grow in importance. Civilization anyway has ever centred in the idea of the city — Babylon, Nineveh, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Athens, Rome, Constantinople, Florence. And this will be more true of the future than of the past. Already the Civitas Dei is supplanting that older idea of a Regnum Dei. It is here, in the city, where life is lived intensely and the economic pressure is heaviest, that the Christ-of-the-crowd has taken up his residence.

The Jews are going to rediscover Jesus. And they are to find in him a fulcrum whereby to bring their democratism to bear effectually on modern society. The Jews are foremost among the agitators for a new social order. For in their veins courses the blood that coursed in the veins of The Carpenter. Reports Renan: "In the revolutionary movements of France, the Jewish element played an important part." And that is true to-day the world over. More than by any other, the discontents of our time are being brought to an insurrectionary edge

by two Jews — Lassalle and Marx. Israel is calling to-day for rebaptism, a new birth. For the Pharisee has been too long enthroned over her. The sons of the ghetto are waxing weary of the husk of rabbinism, the pompously intoned mummery of the past. In Germany, "95 per cent. of the Jewish youth is atheistic, and at best utterly indifferent." In England, "It is a critical time for judaism. The synagogues become less and less frequented." From a Jewish mother comes the wail: "What shall we teach our children? For we are raising them without religion. Oh, yes, we have our Sunday schools. You send your children there, but for what? To learn ancient history and the rudiments of a dead language. Do you call that religion?" The Jews live in a ghetto of their own making. They need the fresh breezes from the world outside, and the world outside needs them. Pent up in her self-made Jewries, she has a submerged but not suppressed idealism. For democracy is the master light of all her seeing. With Protestantism worshipping a Jew, and Roman Catholicism worshipping a Jewess, Israel is not going to be defrauded much longer of her heritage in Mary of Nazareth and The Carpenter. (The Good Friday petition in the Prayer-book, "Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics," is a bit ungracious, considering Who it is that the church has enthroned for her worship, and from whose loins he derived.)

And Israel is making ready to enter into this, her birthright. She is shaking off the dust and mould of centuries, and is consigning to the limbo of departed things the ghetto accumulations of phylacteries, fringes and

the measurings of anise and cummin. Judah's long travail through the ages is not going to be in vain. The dead ghost is coming to life. For judaism is natively a social enthusiasm. It is Rabbi Menes who breaks the silence thus: "Christianity of to-day is not the old, original christianity. It is not Jesusism, for it is not the religion which Jesus preached." Professor Lombroso's solution of the anti-Semitic problem is a new religion, "which should take as its standard the new social ideas which christ has already preached." Exclaims one of the dreamers of the ghetto: "I give the Jews a christ they can now accept, the Christians a christ they have forgotten — christ, not the tortured God but the joyous comrade, the friend of all simple souls; not the theologian spinning barren subleties, but the man of genius, the lover of warm life and warm sunlight and all that is fresh and simple and pure and beautiful." The collapse of the old faiths is leaving a void and an ache in the heart of man to-day. The Jew, through his intense democratism, was the giver of the Bible to men. Mayhap that same democratism — a piece of baggage unlost in these eighteen centuries of her wilderness wanderings — may make her again the guiding light of a world in search of a religion.

It is with reason, therefore, that leaders of the popular cause are beginning to turn to the Man of Nazareth. America will not be redeemed until Americans have learned to die. Without shedding of one's blood there is no remission of sins. Out of agonies and bloody sweat cometh the regeneration. Utilitarian ethics don't

stand up when the cavalry come. Something more is needed if there is to be to-day a reincarnation of that people who, in the words of Thucydides, "dared beyond their strength, and hazarded against their judgment, and in extremities were of an excellent hope." Said Chesterton Hill, "religion is a sociological necessity." For, when shall have come the people's coronation, an affirmative programme will be needed. A platform of protest will do for a cause during its minority. But when it becomes of age and enters upon responsibility, a constructive temper is demanded. Porcupine ethics, the "don't-tread-on-me" principle, has not reach enough for a high and full-orbed life.

The scriptures are being rediscovered. "The Bible good for the lower orders to accept?" All right. And they are finding it so meaty with democratism that they could well afford to endow the Bible Society to distribute the book in widest commonalty. The old bishop of Augsburg must have had a glimpse of its explosive nature: "Press not the breasts of holy scripture too hard, lest they yield blood rather than milk." But the blood is the life. The Just One at the right hand of power overbroods this present time, and sends out a vital nerve to every social devotee, to every daring dreamer. When Jesus identified himself with the proletariat of the ancient world, he took this modern age of democracy by the forelock. His all-mastering faith in the common people of his day has achieved for him, now in democracy's dawn, an inalienable lordship.

This drawing near to The Carpenter by democracy's

consecrated host, is being furthered by a similar movement in the christian ranks — the powerful and rapidly growing Ritschlian movement. An anti-theistic party that numbers such upholders as Ritschl, Harnack, Hartmann, and McGiffert will have to be reckoned with. It says: As to the primary cause of the cosmic process, man knows not and essentially cares not; barren for purposes of the moral life is the womb of that dark enigma; let the church forget this controversy of a former time, "those old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago," and give herself to present-day themes. McGiffert speaks in no uncertain tone: "It is well to make thoroughgoing work of the matter. We have no business with a theology out of touch with the controlling interest of our lives." And he continues: "Science finds no God in nature. To put him within the universe and connect him with the processes of nature is to invite science to exclude him altogether, as it has excluded the old, miracle-working God of other days. Not in the physical world, the world of science, but in the realm of purpose, the realm of ethical and spiritual values, is God to be sought. The universe which science knows is sufficient unto itself, and needs no God within or without." And the Hibbert Journal enforces the same: "If the church is ever to be a real power in the world again, she must jettison the Pauline metaphysics and seek inspiration from the best thought of our own time."

The social effect of the Ritschlian movement has not as yet made itself felt. A theological shift of this magnitude is too deep for its rumblings to reach quickly to the surface, where human beings live and where the world's

work is wrought. But they will reach there in time. For the seismic vibrations are coursing their way up through the crust; they will get themselves noticed. A theology that lifts up the Revolutionist of Galilee as the supreme object of the world's worship, and which fortifies itself therein by closest historical science and by intellectual certitude, is going to have a reach into the realm of economics. There is more social dynamite in Ritschlianism than in Karl Marx and Henry George put together.

That carpenter shop in Nazareth is a fulcrum from which democracy can move the world. There is regeneracy enough in the words of Jesus to right every wrong and to straighten every crookedness. He had no economic programme. The attempt to monopolize him for some particular plan of social architecture has done harm. For his oceanic nature refuses to be circumscribed within the limits of a fish-pond. The Carpenter, with that sagacity which never forsook him, knew that there can be no patent-right and machine-made redemption of society. An antitoxin against nervous breakdown can never be. For the nerves react to a thousand stimuli, any one of which, or the myriad combinations of them, may be the causer of the trouble. Only by restoring the entire man — and the environment along with him — can a permanent cure be effected. Jesus was too expert a social physician to advertise some economic programme as the cure-all of the sickness that has overtaken society. Rather, he set a religion loose in the world which should, through the upward centuries, work the cure. That religion, as we have seen, was wrested from its purpose of earth-redemption by the special interests, those who

profited by a sick condition of society. But the cure remains, nevertheless, and needs but to be re-directed toward humanity's sore to reattest itself the sovereignest thing in all the world for social dementedness. Democracy is a passion and not a programme. If its warp is materiality, its woof is spirituality. It is shot with religion through and through. It is a wager of faith. Its greatest gains have been in those eras when it has made largest demands on idealism, and has had its anchorage in the world of the unseen and the eternal.

CHAPTER XIX

LEST THE TOWERS FALL

The situation to-day is tense, and is daily becoming tenser. There is a haunting sense of the abyss. The cash nexus is petering out. Prophets say that we are headed for trouble; they announce the oncoming of social bankruptcy, they state that there is enough material of discontent already in solution to form a red revolution, when comes the precipitation moment. There is piling up to-day the vastest accumulation of vested rights the world has ever seen; and there is moving toward it a lava stream of insurgency. Voices cry a head-on collision not far ahead. Professor Lange, philosopher and economist, points out: "The present state of things has been frequently compared with that of the ancient world before its dissolution, and it cannot be denied that significant analogies present themselves. We have the immoderate growth of wealth, we have the proletariat, we have the decay of morals." Said Herbert Spencer in a letter to an American friend: "We have bad times before us and you have still more dreadful times before you — civil war, immense bloodshed, and eventually military despotism of the severest type." One need not be a seer to detect that the atmosphere is becoming charged and electrical. To mention but

one of the signs, the spectre of an oncoming irreligious citizenship is sufficiently consternating, and may well give pause to every lover of his country. Sane men to-day are asking if this our fair heritage of civilization is to be again overthrown.

The masses have more material comforts than they have had before, but less of justice. The share of the worker in the product of his toil is shrinking — the percentage, that is. He may be rising in the scale of materialities, but the master class is rising also, and in vastly greater degree. One boy in America, not yet fifteen, has a fortune of $72,000,000. His income is near ten thousand dollars a day. This fortune was heaped up for him in the space of one generation — a rise in the scale of living which has not been matched by an equal rise for labour throughout ten thousand years of toil. Wealth confers industrial mastership. The "dead hand" has been abolished in law. But the power of mortmain still abides over the workshop, and hands over a hundred workmen, herd-like, to the heir.

The argument one hears for the present competitive control of industry is that its long hours and driving toil increase the supply of wealth, and that this increase overflows in some measure to the masses everywhere — witness the dinner to which a day labourer sits down to-day, compared with what peasants formerly ate, and the clothes he wears, compared with the leather breeches of an earlier day. But the argument is wide of the mark. No increase in material goods can compensate for the decay of free spirits. In a civilization

based on money, the poor in purse are compelled to be poor in spirit. The labour movement is not for material goods; it is for spiritual goods. The real agitators against an iniquitous social system are never those who "feel hunger at the maw," but a class above them. The tribe that accepts a place in the bread line, free blankets, night shelters, and soup in the mission house, have not the firm material out of which democracy forges her weapons. Agitators come from the class that thinks and feels. A hungry gut bites sharp, but a sense of wrong bites sharper. And sense of wrong is arrived at in each age by comparison with one's contemporaries, not by comparison with one's ancestors.

That animal well-being is important above all else, and is to be secured at any price, was the argument which hindered more than anything else the liberation movement under Moses. As slaves in the Goshen brickyards the Israelites had an assured domicile, with stated doles of food and clothing. The exodus out of that slavery into the uncertainties of wilderness life very soon brought murmurings against their leader: "Would to God we had died in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots and when we did eat bread to the full." Not without reason have the "flesh-pots of Egypt" become the synonym of ignoble contentment, moral inertia, cowardice of spirit. Jesus had to meet the argument. There were those in his day who justified the coming of the Roman Empire on the ground that, through its repression of patriotism and the higher sentiments, the people's restlessness was deadened and peace secured — under the Pax Romana material gain

was increased. But he answered that "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth"; that self-respect is more to be desired than a full belly — yes, that they who seek the full belly alone shall lose it; but that they who seek the kingdom of self-respect first, shall have the full belly added unto them.

The argument of the flesh-pots is being heard to-day, deprecating the liberation of the negro slaves in the South on the ground that their material well-being was looked after under slavery more carefully than it is now. It is heard in every political campaign — the cartoon of the full dinner pail, that stock argument of the benevolent feudalism of the day. The rich material civilization that is being created by the fiercely competitive industrialism of our time, is cited as compensation for the loss of liberty. The bath-tub in every house, the "fowl in the pot every Sunday," cheap and swift transportation, clothes tailored after the latest models, the penny newspaper, the libraries — a range of material well-being which kings formerly would have envied — is being held up before the eyes of the people as a salve for the hurt of industrial bondage. It is not too much to say that the "flesh-pots of Egypt" have been in every age democracy's greatest foe.

Remembering that it is ratio, and not the absolute amount of wealth received by him, that is causing the unrest and the social upheaval of our day, it is evident to the seeing eye that the coming of machinery has aggravated the sore. For machine production has shifted the control tenfold more into the hands of the baronial class. Instead of a wedge placed underneath

and lifting the entire mass equally, it has sundered square through the social body, cleaving it in twain. Sang the Greek poet Antiparos two thousand years ago, on the occasion of the introduction of the water-wheel into Europe (and the words not only bear a pertinency to the particular theme but have a broad overflow on the conception of nature held in the days of creative art): "Slaves who turn the mill-stone, spare your hands. The labour of young girls is performed by the water-nymphs, and now they leap, shining and light, upon the wheel as it revolves. They drag around the axle which turns with its spokes and puts in motion the great stone which turns round and round." But the prophecy has gone limpingly to its fulfilment. Well-nigh three fourths of human labour to-day is so exhausting that it stupefies. The water-nymphs and their fellow handmaids have indeed been harnessed, so that the production of wealth has increased a thousand-fold over the days of hand labour. But the increase has gone to the oligarchy at the top, and only scantily to the toilers at the bottom: so that the gulf has been widened. One tenth of the people own nine tenths of the wealth, and the disproportion is growing. Says John Stuart Mill: "It is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being." The age boasts many triumphs over time and space—a multiplicity of contrivances! But these wonder-working flames, these levers and cogways more than human, have built for the toilers no avenue to heaven.

As men are minds and spirits even more than they are bodies, these hugely unequal conditions are chafing

a sore spot in the heart. Jesus held that an equation between men should be at all times possible — well-being apportioned according to worth. But to-day, with the coalescence of the families of the possessing class, life is becoming increasingly immobile; the fluidity of the social mass is coagulating. America's industrialism is great, but the social chasm is greater. Privileges wrested from the many are used for the fattening of a few. Dividend-hunters cohere into a moneyed oligarchy, and are cementing themselves into a class consciousness that is sundering society like a wedge. Fat kine against lean kine, tell a tale of social breakdown. Nothing is more clear than that the financial and industrial directorate is concentrating in the hands of a few allied families, while one fourth of the population in our great cities is at or below the starvation line. A polarization toward wealth and poverty — a generation of graspers and gaspers. For when the rich grow richer, those of stationary fortune grow relatively — and therefore actually — poorer. Freedom of contract? Separate the workman from his tools, and he has as much freedom as a rat against the terrier in the pit. Freedom of contract? Under the forms of modern freedom a crueler serfdom is in process than in the old days of status, for the ancient guarantees are now lost, which once assured the peasant food and a roof. Here is the root of transgression: Production is for the sake of profit, the toiling masses are used for tools. Things were meant to be the donkey, and man the rider. When, instead, man is made to get on all fours and carry the donkey, the arrangement will last —— as far as the next bridge.

They who think that the social revolution of our day is belly-centred, think a very foolish thing. The craving for a camaraderie in human affairs is the deepest of all cravings Augustine pointed out that sex immoralities are in large part the perversions of a divine yearning for companionship. This was evidently the case with the woman in the banquet scene at Simon's house. Back of her fallen life, Jesus saw a fund of native affection which, denied expression through the caste lines of the day, with its matrimony based on dowries, had sought vent in illegitimate unions: "I say unto thee, her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much." And, on a similar occasion: "Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way and sin no more." The sores of Lazarus demand something else than free dispensaries in the tenement districts, and doles of antiseptic wash. Better a dinner of herbs, in a democracy of the love of brothers, than a stalled ox where no love is. Humanity can get along without wealth, and has; some of the greatest achievements of the human spirit have been amidst a material environment which to-day would be called beggarly. But humanity cannot get along without fellowship. Hence this modern gehenna of shams and shoddies — the poor straitened in spirit more and more, to keep up by outward show an equality that vanished long ago. A crust is sweet in the kingdom of self-respect; but a banquet eaten amid humiliations, viewed by condescending eyes, is hard fare and makes for leanness. Therefore these discontents, whose fire is not quenched and whose worm dieth not — a million white teeth are gnawing at the pillars of the state. It is well

in this connection to reiterate that a storm is caused by the difference in pressure between two atmospheric areas — nature abhorring a too great inequality. When that overplus of pressure piles up in the social atmosphere, by terrible things in righteousness is the equilibrium restored.

Disproportionate fortunes are not only bad for those at the bottom — inducing in them, were they to submit, a decay of self-respect. They are bad also for those at the top. Satiety is as great a destroyer of the spirit as poverty. Inordinate prosperity corrupts instead of ennobling its possessor — a monster devouring him in the guise of security and peace. Jesus regarded the over-rich as distinct objects of pity. He perceived that the cares and preoccupations which great wealth enforces, hinder the growth of the interior man and atrophy the soul — the facility of life destroyed by excess of goods. Care Castle! the palace of aching hearts! To drain the nipples of delight — is it not to mature for one's self a world weariness, when a man in the morning shall wish it were night, and in the night wait for the morning? Sumptuous living is not a begetter of liberty and genius. They who abide in marble halls are not largely noted for distinguishing achievement. Vulgar strivings and the inflow of ease-loving vices have been immemorially the attendants of great wealth. Said Malmesbury, "it is not common, but even more rare than a white crow, for men to abound in riches and not give indulgence to their vices." And a prominent New York daily — not given to scareheads — furnishes to our ancient chronicler its modern counterpart, a society

rotting into revolution: "There is no denying," it says editorially, "that we have reached something like a social crisis in the United States. Within a year we have had far too many marital scandals, and other results of moral turpitude in our high life — that is to say, among the rich Americans — and there is not enough intellectual force, artistic appreciation, or public spirit among people of that quality, to compensate the country for the bad influence of their misdeeds": buttressing what Governor Altgeld said: "Money never established republican institutions in the world. It has no natural affinity with them, and does not understand them. Money has neither soul nor sentiment. It does not know the meaning of liberty, and it sneers at the rights of man. It never bled on the battle-field in time of war, and it never voluntarily sought the public treasury in time of peace."

Not entirely to be wondered at, therefore, that the democracy is quite set in its determination, and predicts that the end of some of these things is at hand. For a feel of might is developing in its breast: it will break oppressions with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. High diet side by side with a bread line, is bad — bad at both ends; and both shall be done away. The present precipitous inequalities are dehumanizing. The bones of the human neck were not made for a steep bend either up or down; the vertebræ permit some slant from the horizontal, but protest with vim when the angle gets acute. The democracy has learned how to produce wealth; she is going to learn now how to divide it. The alteration in the social edifice will

cause some disturbance. The masters of the ship cry out that this shifting of the human ballast in the hold endangers the stability of the vessel. To which is answered: It was unwisely done, O masters of the ship, to use human beings for ballast.

Thus far in humanity's advance the effect of aggregations of wealth on human society has been almost uniformly divisive. The few exceptions do but prove the rule: Great property interests contract a man's horizon and beget an anti-social spirit. In its break-up of families, its severing of friendships, its commercializing of the sacredest human relationships, property may almost be styled the destroyer of delights and the sunderer of societies. So that it is an open question whether the institution of private property on the whole has not done harm. It has increased the world's wealth; but the wranglings, the animosities, the castes which have gone with it have been so fatal to joy and high achievement, that the world at this moment could well afford to have fewer goods and more good. The version of the Rich Young Man incident, as the Gospel of the Hebrews has it, is suggestive in its terseness: "Behold, many of thy brethren, sons of Abraham, are clad with dung, dying with hunger, and thy house is full of much goods." The mere presence of extremes in human society was to The Carpenter a proof of an unsocial and anti-social heart in the class at the top. The story of Dives, whom Jesus sent to hell, was not "The Parable of the Bad Rich Man," but merely, "The Parable of the Rich Man."

When contrasts become too steep, nature restores the

equilibrium, even though it bring to pass the while a day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity; when prayer voices, "hoarse with long silence," lift themselves to avert "the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall."

To this condition of tenseness, of social strain, we have on the other side the spectacle of a sick church. The dying out of altar fires and the perishing of the gods, would be a bodeful thing in any age. But in an age of unprecedented increase in wealth, and the self-indulgence and social restiveness which an enormous increase of wealth inevitably brings, a mortal sickness on the part of her religion foretells for civilization a grave crisis. We are hard up against a libertinage armoured with intellectual certitude. And that libertinage would not be confined to those at the top. Not without reason, prophets vision a day "when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way."

Froude will not be accused of hysteria. He drew a parallel between the era that witnessed the overthrow of the Roman Republic, and our own day. He says, of that period in Rome: "The whole spiritual atmosphere was saturated with cant — cant moral, cant political, cant religious; an affectation of high principle which had ceased to touch the conduct, and flowed on in increas-

ing volume of insincere and unreal speech." And he adds: "Tendencies now in operation may a few generations hence land modern society in similar conclusions, unless other convictions revive meanwhile and get the mastery of them; of which possibility no more need be said than this, that unless there be such a revival in some shape or other, the forces, whatever they be, which control the forms in which human things adjust themselves, will make an end again, as they made an end before, of what are called free institutions. Popular forms of government are possible only when individual men can govern their own lives on moral principles, and when duty is of more importance than pleasure, and justice than material expediency."

CHAPTER XX

TRANSFIGURED

The conclusion of the whole matter is reassuring. We have seen that the economic is the master knot of human fate. Below all surface facts, the tramp of armies, pageantry of empire, intonings of liturgy, and even the systematizings of doctrine — for theology too has been most responsive to economic stimuli — stretches the bed-rock, man's industrial status. So that christianity needs to get a new set of words. Historians who have awakened to the importance of the economic, have staked out the richest pay dirt at present under claim. Christianity took its rise in an economic convulsion. It was the flowering forth of Israel's age-old stalk of liberty — an attempt at a world-wide democratism which should countervail Rome's world-wide absolutism. Its Leader was slaughtered by Rome and her Caiaphas allies as an agitator, a disturber of the peace: and his followers were hunted with fire and crosses through more than a hundred years. Unable to compass its destruction by violence, Rome thereupon resorted to craftiness. She annexed christianity. Sicklied o'er with philosophy, religion ceased to be the spontaneous upreach of man to his Maker, and became an engine of social control. But the "leaven hid in the meal" refused to be annexed;

so that to-day the world is yeasty with insurgency and upheaval.

The "fierce democratie" is to many a scare and a bogie. Its imperturbable advance, at a rate against which no barriers are effectual, has to them something bodeful about it — "a certain fearful looking for of judgment." To which mood of the soul an ancient saw seems applicable: The wicked flee when no man pursueth. For these nightmares come from an overloaded conscience. They think of democracy's coronation as a day of burnings and fuel of fire, with confused noise and garments rolled in blood. But the red sky which these take for a conflagration — might it not be the red of dawn?

The charge is brought against the social democracy that it is an inflamer of the masses. But the masses need to be inflamed. To be set aflame — is not that quite the divinest thing that can happen to a man or to a set of men? The cold, dull heart of humanity needs fire. Art, literature, politics, religion, are judged solely by the extent to which they are inflammatory of otherwise inert and dead humanity. Not incapacity for government but indifference to it, has ever been the nub of the difficulty. Prometheus was the saviour type because he was the fire-bringer. And Jesus showed his saviourhood nowhere more convincingly than in his manifesto: "I am come to bring fire on the earth." The awakenment of the populace, while the most difficult, is also the most splendid work — the goal toward which all education, all inspiration through the slow centuries have climbed. Whatsoever is pure and lovely and of good report, comes from souls that have been set on fire: whilst, with the

dying out of the fires of the spirit, immoralities come trooping in. Dante was guided by a sure instinct when he broke with tradition and pictured hell as a cold and soggy swamp, the negation of life and warmth. The event to which the whole creation moves, is that humanity might have life, and that it might have it more abundantly.

Civilization is threatened with the sleeping sickness. America's danger is not the boiling over of the caldron; her danger is lest the fire be drawn from under and the boiling stop altogether. For the vices of civilization are taking the place of the vices of barbarism — and are more to be feared. There came a time in Rome when her people lost the desire for self-government; it was the second death, and from there there is no resurrection. The trouble is, the people are too conservative. The natural man prefers the flesh-pots of Egypt to the high adventure in the wilderness. The people conquered and content, refusing the fire even when it is brought to them — that is the vulture which tears the liver of a prometheus, and which wrings from every saviour heart the cry of god-forsakenness. In all ages the difficulty has been that God is in a hurry and man is not.

Let America's working class once have their spirit broken, and it would be all up with her. When self-respect is no longer the inhabiter of the house, decadence knocks at the door. America's industrialism dominates the world, because her industrialists are high spirited. Let that nerve be snapped — her industry's proud magnificence would be overtaken with a palsy. Nature will not be subjugated by men who are themselves in sub-

jugation. One need but enter any manufacturing plant to-day, with its plexus of wheels and beltings and furnaces — the roar of its forges, the creak of the crane, the shriek of the dynamo, the trip-hammer's plunge, hiss of steam — to visualize the dumb titan forces there being invoked by man. Let the workmen in that Atlantean smithy slump from freedom down into slavish, colourless, uneager things — those titan forces would detect the fact, and would throw off the collar of servitude. Only workfolk who eat the bread of self-respect shall win respect from the nature titans and naïads.

The seething at the bottom of society to-day is distinctly of favourable omen. Stiffened by manly fibre, refusing doles of charity, the working class shall be the saviours of a civilization threatened with dry rot. Distrust of man was to The Carpenter the sin against the holy ghost, which shall not be forgiven. If one half the effort that is going into "keeping the lid on," were spent in utilizing the human forces pent under that lid, the millennium would peep at us from around the corner. The fires of hell, burning at present to no profit, are a waste on the resources of the universe. Conservation — a seasonable theme just now — should turn its attention thither. For the flames of hell, if put to productive use, would run all the machinery of the universe.

Danger to civilization? There is a danger to civilization. But it comes not from the agitator type of workingman. It comes from the rabble underneath, who have no desire for freedom, and are content with the bread line. Devoid of respect for them-

selves, when comes the hour of opportunity they will be devoid of respect for others. This type of man, claiming no rights for himself, will respect not the rights of another. That vast underworld population, brainless, heartless, soulless, presents distinctly a danger. Worth while in this connection to dig up Macaulay's letter to an American: "The day will come when, in the state of New York, a multitude of people, not one of whom has had more than half a breakfast, or expects to have more than half a dinner, will choose a legislature. Is it possible to doubt what sort of legislature will be chosen? I seriously apprehend that you will in some such season of adversity as I have described, do things which will prevent prosperity from returning. Either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as powerfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth; with this difference — that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country and by your own institutions." The slums are a blood clot in any civilization; when the circulation is not vigorous enough to reabsorb them, an apoplexy is threatened.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God is preparing for the world, when once he and the people shall have got together. Hitherto, in practically every age, religion has been on the side of the privileged class and against the working class. And in this day

of the interrogation of all things, this is being found out. Students of the time deplore the "decay of the very spirit of religion." There is no such decay. The heart of man is irrepressibly religious. But a suspicion has got abroad that religion in its institutional forms is a device to keep the masses cowed. A theology which teaches that God is Mammon's silent partner, would be necessarily suspect in an age of folk upheaval. Let that suspicion be lifted, and the at present repressed soul of man will publish abroad once more the "joy of believing." Property needs not God to protect it. Let a danger be whispered against property — instanter a thousand arms arise to fend it. It is the people need a divine protector. Jesus announced "good news," namely, that heaven is passionately on the side of the people against the despotic tendencies of property; and under that leadership a messianic passion for men is announcing itself. The trouble is, the working people at large have not yet come to behold The Carpenter, obscured as he is by an overgrowth of verbiage and ritual and theologisms. If by some gift of tongues it could be proclaimed everywhere that Jesus, the solace of the world's sorrow — he who, by bringing life and immortality to light, has blunted the sharpness of death — is on the side of the people against their devourers, a religious awakening would billow across the continent, put an end to an age of unfaith, and reconstruct society. Let the case take a change of venue from the court of mysticism to the court of economics, and religion will find in the latter a jury packed and eager to give her a verdict.

To the sick church of christendom, therefore,

democracy comes with healing. It restores the economic basis, without which can be no robust spirituality. For, in its creative eras, religion has not been something tacked onto life — a decorative adjunct — but life itself ennobled and transfigured. Each was meant to help the other. Earth and heaven are twins joined from birth by a vital ligature; if earth takes sick, heaven sickens also. An earth restored to economic health would pulsate new blood into the other twin. "Let justice be done though the heavens fall," said a robust believer of ancient times. "Let justice be done lest the heavens fall," is the utterance of the believer class to-day. A people economically dependent is not going to be spiritually rugged.

It is meaty with significance that the Jews, the one nation of antiquity that stood for democracy, was the nation which has given religion to the civilized world. Does it not suggest that there is a blood relationship between democracy and spirituality? and that religion has for its one purpose to impart to democracy a perennial impulse and inspiration? Periods of political subjection and economic slavery have been periods also of religious decline. But those eras in which the peoples have awakened to interrogation and demand, have seen also a spiritual outflowering. Chrysostom, Savonarola, Wyclif, Luther, Knox, Robinson — the more exact history of our day is revealing the economic movement back of and underlying their propagandas; in each of them, beneath all the theologic verbiage, some social imperative can be discerned. Said Cranmer, describing the Pilgrims: "They desire nothing more than the spoil, ruin, and destruction of them that be rich." It is the

overstatement of an enemy. Nevertheless it discloses a political side to the pilgrim movement without which the "Mayflower" will not be understood, and which explains the Declaration of Independence a century and a half later. Religion is the soul of which the state is the body. At present we have a democratical state and a monarchical religion. Is it wonder that the spirit of the age suffers dislocation, that the harmony of life jangles off into barbarous discord, and that there is arising a tribe of spiritual nomads who seek to find a footing amidst the universal doubt and seek in vain.

Jesus encountered in his day a pietist party — inhabiters of a dream world. Therefore he insisted that his aim lay, "in this present time." He refused to permit azure reaches of space to seep in and cloud the issue. He was not a mere vendor of impalpable wares. "The Restoration" which he announced was not a mass of spiritual vision remote from the life of men, but had to do with the conditions under which the world did its daily work and earned its daily bread. Remembering the insistence on self-respect which rumbles through his every saying, we may define spirituality as a high-spirited mood become habitual. The attempt to explain away from his words all of the explosive passages, has brought to pass a denaturized christianity, a neuter in the world's affairs, all of the virility gelded out of it. Those inveterate parables of Jesus are inexpungable from the record. There are some who would be inclined to say that Jesus in these passages "emptied himself of his godhead." But the common people hear him gladly; the working class is not magnetized by the portrait of a decorative christ; to

these attempts to dress The Carpenter in purple and fine linen, to wash from his hands the stain of toil, replace his working clothes with imperator apparel, and remove him into a cloistered aloofness from the good gross earth, the heart of the toiler cries out its bereavement: "They have taken away my lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

The democracy asks of the Church but one thing — that she stick to the gospel. In getting away from the historic Jesus, she abnegates the charter of her existence. Let her recant, let her bravely respeak her abdication, and the working class will come back to her altars, thronging her as they thronged her Founder from Galilee to Golgotha. With christianity once democratized, 'twould not be long before the democracy would be christianized. The task of the twentieth century is going to be to convert the Church to The Carpenter. For the democracy is already being converted unto him. The recoil from an artfully contrived system of "faith" has led many of the proletariat to the street corner and the pothouse — their feet hastened thither by the drink-inducing conditions of modern industry: "Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious, o'er all the ills of life victorious." But this will not be for always. Democracy has a religious root. In its struggle for existence it turns to the Galilean Comrade with the cry, "uphold me by thy free spirit." In the fellowship of The Carpenter there is going to be wrought a statement of religion that will make scepticism ridiculous.

The secret places of the Most High form an inviolable realm, where daring dreams are nourished. They whose

inner life is continuous with that prodigious realm, "have root in themselves"; their power to dream and to dare shall not wither. For this Galilean held that life should be a great adventure. He demanded followers who were unconventional enough to risk everything for their ideals — said they should "hate their lives," even to the point of carrying around with them a cross on their backs, to have it handy whenever their enemies might wish to bring off a crucifixion. His pity for the rich was because they wax timorous and dull. The purpose of life is to live — Jesus was very emphatic about that. The rich fool pampers himself until his soul becomes tender, gets to be a stay-at-home, fears to go out to the call of high adventure. To compromise is to become commonplace. Jesus would have none of it. He cared only for the thoroughbred type. Two-mindedness — that vice of middleclass folk — awoke in him an utter distaste. Men groaned under a tenth — he exacted all. He could not away with the careful, the calculating chap. "Master, where dwellest thou? Come and see. They came" — for pure romance there is nothing like it elsewhere in literature. Now, as in that day, the world needs a fresh wave of life. To find a new dream! that is the craving of a humankind grown old and cowardly. It needs commerce with the Insurgent of Galilee, whose career was the romantic as opposed to the conventional, and whose dwelling place was the clear air of the hills and the salt sting of the sea marsh. The "tradition of the elders!" — he laughed it to scorn; said that the spirit should be permitted to blow whithersoever it listeth. He contended

for the abundant life, against the curse of commonplaceness — "he that saveth his life shall lose it."

Though his three public years were passed in city throngs, his eighteen wage-earner years were amidst rural scenes. Jesus was a country carpenter. This had bred in him a love of out-of-doors. He had nourished his spirit on the song of water courses, and the evening hymns intoned by meadow and woodland. Accordingly it was the poetry of nature that he voiced, the romance of field and furrow. There is to-day a rejuvenescence of country life. Forty millions of our people live outside the cities. A new rural civilization is called for, if the springs of urban life are to be kept fresh and wholesome. Agriculture is the fundamental industry. Important therefore beyond describing are the tides of life that ebb and flow in those who live on the land. There needs a strong centre of rest, around which shall pivot our vast and eager industrialism. Rural life cannot be lived successfully save by those who love the open, who see the poetry of work on the farm, the abiding significance of seedtime and harvest, the love stories of animal life, the drama of the soil, and to whose ears the hum of the mower in the June clover is music. The Carpenter's evangel — the marriage of labour and worship, religion expressed in terms of the day's work — is needed by the land tillers, to idealize rural life and tasks. He whose red blood was spent for economic justice, said also, "consider the lilies." The Poet of Galilee shall unlock the imaginative treasures of the countryside. Its inhabiters shall be fashioned by him into the minnesingers of a richer romance than the old, the romance of the favourable earth — of man

and his creative vocation. So shall the new streams of country life be turned into channels of idealism.

Workingmen see in Jesus one of themselves. On coming into power one of their first acts would be to put this Workingman into the public schools — a moulder of childhood's formative clay. The Carpenter of Nazareth is the greatest working force in history. He is woven into every part of knowledge. To keep him longer quarantined from the schools and colleges would not only bereave the young of collision with the most efficient moral dynamic ever known, but it would also maim the intellect. Jesus is the central fire that burns at the heart of history. Leave him out, European chronicles are meaningless — the march of the centuries nothing but a splendid chaos. Art, letters, the development of institutions, are knowable only to those who know him. He is the red cord across the stretch of the centuries, the clue to an otherwise infinite maze and bafflement. Only to whoso has knowledge of this Workingman is there presented a map of history, and the human drama unfolds itself in a scheme of orderliness and progression. The calendar on the wall of every home and shop and office attests the unavoidable Carpenter. To release him, therefore, from the Sunday schools and the catechism — those prison chambers — into the public school where he belongs by inalienable right, is the premier need of our day.

The Bible as a whole is a literature which it were criminal to embargo longer from the school room. Said Huxley: "I have always been strongly in favour of secular education, in the sense of education without theology; but I must confess that I have been no less

seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up, in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters, without the use of the Bible. Take the Bible as a whole, and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills in, like themselves, the interval between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all time according to its effort to do good and hate evil?"

That democracy is a force making for peace, that it maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, that it breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder, is being conceded to-day even by its enemies. The "Red International" was pictured by the governments of Europe in horriferous terms. But listen to the preamble of its manifesto: "The red flag is the symbol of blood shed by the people for liberty. It represents the unity and fraternity of the races of men, while the national banners represent hostility and war between the different States." In 1870, France and Germany were in fratricidal war. Undeterred, the Paris federation of the "International" sent a message to their fellow proletarians in Berlin: "War is the indirect means by which governments stifle the liberties of the people." And the Berlin local replied: "With heart and hand we adhere to your proclamation. We solemnly vow that neither beat of drum, nor victory, nor defeat shall divert us from our efforts to establish the union of the workers

of all countries." The Carpenter had for his other name, "Prince of Peace." His birth was hailed with a "Peace on earth, good will to men." And fittingly. Not that his cult is a cult of softness. The creed of The Carpenter is stern-hearted against the exploiter; and it may be dangerous once more to be a christian. But it declares this last and final war in order that war may come to a perpetual end. The great campaign for which democracy is filling its arsenal, is the conquest of nature. Its weapons are the ploughshare and the pruning-hook. And man shall partake bountifully of the fruits of the earth, for they will be the "abundant fruits of righteousness."

Richard Wagner cries out against "the profound immorality of our civilization"; and is joined therein by fellow craftsmen. They sigh for the spacious days of those who

> Lived long ago in the morning of the world,
> When earth was nearer heaven than now.

When God and the common people were neighbourly, workmen put conscience into their work. "In the elder days of art the builders wrought with greatest care each minute and unseen part; for the great God sees everywhere." This scroll has been found in the tomb of an old Egyptian: "Love of work he has to do brings a man nearer to the gods." They worshipped while they worked, and therefore needed not to work laboriously in their worship. Wagner, to whose all-sided mind were granted sure insights into the realm of religion, glimpsed the cause of the modern decay of art compared with those earlier days. Said he: "Christianity was the offspring of the

folk; so long as it remained a purely popular expression, everything in it was sturdily honest and genuine." And he cried out against our modern age, with its enthronement of a privileged class: "I will destroy the order of things that turns millions to slaves of a few, and these few to slaves of their own might, their own riches. I will destroy this order of things, that cuts enjoyment off from labour, makes labour a load, enjoyment a vice, makes one man wretched through want, another through overflow." And he cannot let the theme alone: "It seems as if the state's disposal of the apparently so simple idea of Property had driven a wedge into the body of mankind, that dooms it to a lingering death in agony."

Art is a communal thing. It comes only when the people work together. A dearth of art is to be expected in the riot of individualism that is now upon us — property rights with its meums and tuums; egoism's disintegrating career. The artist nature is social: "Self is so small, make me a part of something larger." An embattled society, class aggregated against class in internecine war, never yet produced great art. Beauty is a timorous thing; caught in the swirl of these discontents, she takes fright and flees. For art production there must needs be a cheerful and hearty society, purged and tranquillized.

But class is going to be done away. Communal life will again bring communal art; the life energies which well up in man so fluently will merge their flow and become a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. The seigniory of Florence in building the Campanile declared that "The Republic, soaring ever above the conception of the most competent judges,

desires than an edifice should be constructed so magnificent in its height and beauty that it shall surpass anything of the kind produced in the time of their greatest power by the Greeks and Romans." Remembering a home under the palms of Nazareth, and a mother there who gave to the world a christmas gift, we are grateful that this church in Florence was the duomo of "St Mary of the Flower." As to that other decree of the city of Florence, there is doubt as to its historic authenticity; but it is none the less characteristic of those high-spirited Florentines, and is suggestive of what will be when democracy shall have taught men the complete art of living together: "Whereas it is the highest interest of a people of illustrious origin so to proceed in their affairs that men may perceive from their external works that their doings are at once wise and magnanimous; it is therefore ordered that Arnulf, architect of our commune, prepare the model or design for the rebuilding of Santa Reparata with such supreme and lavish magnificence, that neither the industry nor the capacity of man shall be able to devise anything more grand or more beautiful: inasmuch as the most judicious in this city have pronounced the opinion, in public and private conferences, that no work of the commune should be undertaken unless the design be such as to make it correspond with a heart which is of the greatest nature, because composed of the spirit of many citizens united together in one common will."

So long as the hand workers at the bottom of society are dumb caryatids, supporting on their backs the temple of privilege which they themselves never enter, life will continue to be fragmentary, departmental. Only they

are great artists who see life whole. And seers shall not steadily see life whole, unless the livers of that life live it whole. The Carpenter of Galilee is the patron of industrial art — the art of the future — seeing that he wrought out in his own personality a reintegration of life's cleaved fragments and showed that it is possible for the worker and the worshipper to be one — laborare est orare. Not causelessly have the followers of the Son of "Mary of the Flower" bestowed upon him in every age the tribute, "Rose of Sharon, Lily of the Valley, Fairest among Ten Thousand." Under him joy — so long now an exile — will come back to the workshop and the factory. In him shall be found the civilizer of our industrialism; and beauty shall be once more upon the earth.

Perhaps the best term by which to describe an artistic renaissance dominated by the ideals of The Carpenter is, a new paganism. In getting away from pagan morals, the world did wisely. But in getting away from the pagan view of nature, the world did unwisely. To the theistic mind — the theologically orthodox mind to-day — the powers and agencies of nature have no spirituality of their own, but are thought of as dead, unsensing implements. To the early Greeks however, nature had a life of its own; so that man and nature were in a sort of comradeship. It was this element whose absence from our modern world Wordsworth deplored so bitterly:

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A Pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn:
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

Wordsworth's plaint was with reason. Theism's unimaginative view, embalming the forces of nature into hard worlds of matter, has made art impossible.

Jesus was a Galilean. The simple-hearted view of nature held in that unconventional people was much like that of the early Greeks. To Galileans, nature was a haunted thing. Seeing Jesus once in a mist, they cry out with alarm, thinking him to be the angry spirit of the lake. This general attitude toward the objects of nature was shared by Jesus. He thinks of the "dry places" as being haunted by spirits. To him disease is a thing conscious, active, rejoicing to be malignant. "He suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him." Evil was to his thought a personal agency at roam through the world, giving to the fact of sin a something of mystery and awfulness. The winds, the air, the light, the "living water," are conceived by him almost in terms of conscious personalities. His speech, so rich in verbal colour, was more than the imagery of a literary mind. To his view the universe was a thing alive and restless, the storm and interplay of inconceivable forces, an unfettered domain of spirits. These were no mere figments of the imagination, airy nothings. They were potent creatures. Above, below, in earth and sky and water, nature was to him a choir, a society of sentient beings. Even the flowers of the field seemed to him to be wearing garments and conscious of their beauty. It was the earth-soul of the early Greeks, the animate spirits of field and stream and woodland. At Cæsarea Philippi he saw the rock-cut niches dedicated

to Pan, where Jordan streams forth from its cave; and he uttered no word of protest.

It was the child attitude toward nature, to be sure. And the Galileans were the butt of much ridicule at the hands of the pedants — provoked olympian laughter among the dry-as-dusts in theologically-minded Jerusalem. But Jesus defended this simple-hearted outlook upon life: Except a man repent and look out upon nature as a little child, he shall not enter the kingdom of art. The modern doctrine of evolution, giving as it does a sort of conscious life to everything in nature, is bringing man back to this primitive, this Galilean view. Wagner's contention is supported. For the art of the future we must not look to the rich and the leisured and the learned. Rather we must look to the proletary mass, that elemental class which has preserved the child-like simplicity so commended by The Carpenter, mercifully spared from becoming too civilized. That voice heard by the steersman on the Ægean, in the day of the triumph of Rome's hard materialism, "Great Pan is dead," was probably the legend of a romancer. But legend has a soul of truth. In the industrial democracy of the future, Pan is going to live again. He will be recalled from his exile. There was more hope for art in working-class Galilee, than in upper-class and hyper-civilized Jerusalem.

The Carpenter of Nazareth has redeemed the toiling masses from contempt. It is no mere trope of rhetoric but literalest fact, that Jesus of Galilee was the incarnation of labour's world-tragedy in its long climb up the ages. Conceived from an ancestry of immemorial toil, gestated amid the swirl of coming despotism, born in a

stable, his cradle an ox manger, suckled in straits and poverty, he knew the sorrows of the disinherited before his feet had felt the ground. From boyhood up, he earned his livelihood by sweat. A free workingman compelled to compete with slave labour, he ate the bread of affliction and drank the cup of servitude. He was a day-labourer; he wore the mechanic's dress; he belonged to what is now known as the tin-dinner-pail crowd. It is far-reachingly significant — and the point will get itself considered in days that are to come — that the hands which were nailed to Golgotha's cross had known the feel of tools and probably bore even at the moment some callouses from his wage-earner days. He lifted up his voice against the industrial oppression; therefore he was led to the slaughter, though there was no harm found in him. And his own self bore the world-old sufferings of the wage class in his own body on the tree. Holman Hunt's symbolical picture, "The Shadow of the Cross," a scene in the carpenter shop in Nazareth, tells the story with fidelity and insight. For it suggests the inter-weavings whereby that workshop and the Golgotha event were plaited into one. In the picture the boy is seen as an apprentice to his father Joseph. He has been working all day, and now is stretching out tired arms — arms put too early to work — in a gesture of weariness. The declining sun, catching the figure, silhouettes it against the wall, the image of a cross. The mother Mary perceives the shadow. She starts with alarm. And her boding of ill was with reason. The coming of the Roman, with his industrial slavery, meant slow crucifixion to labour in ten thousand workshops, and to child

labour dragged from a thousand thousand homes. The cross that topped Calvary's hill, and the Workingman there put lingeringly to death, typed the lot that has been meted out to the wage class through the long historic story. For Labour likewise has known the wormwood and the gall. Of it too is recorded a "descent into hell."

But it is not possible that labour should see corruption. As the death of The Carpenter gathered up and dramatized the crucifixion of the toiling masses, so his triumph over that death is a forecast of democracy's deathless future; so that it proclaims to-day orotundly: "I know that my redeemer liveth." It is not an overstatement: that Workingman of Galilee has apotheosized the labour movement and has made it earth's holiest holy. The cup that caught the blood from the cross became the holy grail, and many's the knight who has sought it. That quest, by the labourists of our day — they of The Carpenter's apostolic succession — is now accomplished. Golgotha has added a rouge to the banner of democracy. It has put a crimson girdle about the earth, to bind all workers into one.

To those who doubt that the world's work, consecrated at this so great price, can become a thing of meaning and beauty, let it be reminded them that it was to this same Workingman that there happened the scene on the Transfiguration Mount. The world's Carpenter is the world's christ, because he alone can commute the day's drudgery into a thing of zest and imagination. An ascent into the Mount, and the materialities of our day transfigure, and become white such as no fuller can whiten, and the dazzled beholders exclaim, "It is good for us to be here."

Every stable is to be a holy place, every work bench an altar. And so shall be set to music the tune that is haunting millions of ears — "that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Let it be conceded that the change into the new order will be with unsettlement for a season. Alterations in the house one is living in never seem for the present to be joyous, but grievous: so that the call of The Carpenter will not pass easily into the ears of some — 'twill have a licentious squint. So far as this class is composed of beneficiaries of the present order, argument is impotent. They hate change with a perfect hatred. The coming of democracy is to them what the coming of the plough is to the inhabiters of an ant-hill — they are able to discern in it no good whatsoever. The lords of England take not at all to the idea of being abolished. And the world over, when the pocket nerve is touched, the gate to reason slams shut. The railing accusations brought by this class, therefore, must be permitted to pass unheeded. Their horns must be cut shorter, quite without asking their consent.

There is another class, however, that opposes democracy with a disinterested opposition: The present seems stable — why not let well enough alone; better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of. But this was the line of argument used also against Jesus. It was because he felt the currents of his day as none other, that he advocated change with a vehemency equalled by none other. Against the stand-patism of his time, he offered "the wisdom of the just." The advance

from the Tiber of the foster-children of the she-wolf made not for peace but for devastation. The Galilean did not create the danger; he pointed out the danger. He saw deeplier than the "conservatives" of his day, and perceived that their "conservatism" was quite the most dangerous force then at work. The Arch of Titus in Rome, memorial of the death which came to Asia and the East five and thirty years later, is a silent witness to the wisdom of The Carpenter and to the unwisdom of those who opposed The Carpenter.

Said Mayor Gaynor of New York City, when he was Judge Gaynor: "The existing order of things! The existing order of things may be the worst possible order of things. The existing order of things crucified Jesus because he was a denouncer; and in this enlightened nation the existing order of things, even during the lifetime of those of us who are still called young, was that one human being might own another, and good men were mobbed for objecting to it. We owe all that we have to the steady advance of the human race against the compact mass who always cried out, and still cry out as lustily as ever, 'Don't disturb the existing order of things'."

Jesus seems to have foreseen the travail when, after long gestation, the seed of revolution planted by him would be a man-child full grown in the body of society and waiting to be born. "A woman when she is in travail," said he, "hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." There are signs that the pangs are setting in. The modern world, pregnant and swelling

with democracy as by fecundation of the holy ghost, is approaching the birth hour — "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." The fearful and unbelieving look upon the muddy tides of democracy, as it were the booming of the surges of chaos against the frail dykes of humanity. But, strange to relate, Jesus did not take the alarmist view. Said he: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

The presence of The Carpenter at the forefront of the proletary advance relieves all gnawing dread. Though in the uncertain mists of the morning his figure may loom monster-like, there comes a reassuring voice: "It is I; be not afraid." No reckless turbulence when Jesus arouses. He was no rabid leader of the mob, no peasant reformer inciting to scythes and pitchforks. With the christ-of-the-calloused-hands at their head, the workers could not be other than a constructive force; the spirit of wisdom shall rest upon them, the spirit of understanding and might. Government by influence is taking the place of government by force. And this is the kind of government most congenial to him of the still small voice, who did not shout or cry aloud, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. He was never one to lash and storm. How vehement soever against the despoiler, in the midst of bitterest invective, a break in his voice was never far absent. He was no demagogue cajoling the multitude, no promiser of smooth things. With the

same aggressive eloquence wherewith he spurred them to uprise, he pointed out to them their need of correctives. With him as the awakener of the toiling masses, naught but good can come. For they will awake in his likeness.

To suppose that the universe is hung on such frail hinges that a change in the human and at present somewhat sorry scheme of things might derange the centre of gravity and bring about the eternal all-smash, is a great atheism. With good old Acosta we can say: "Truly it were a thing worthy the laughing at to thinke so." To live in a universe thus hung on tenter hooks were not worth while. If one had to walk all one's life on tiptoe for fear of upsetting the solar system, the sooner the upset came the better. But tiptoes are not needed. The foundations of the world are fixed so firm that they cannot be moved. Democracy is not perfect; but it is the least imperfect thing the human race thus far has produced. Man for man, there is as much sagacity in the working class as in any other rank of society. To wipe democracy from the slate would be expurgatory of the best enthusiasms of the modern world. Its faults are the faults of strength and not of weakness. They are shadows cast by a morning sun and will grow less.

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THE COUNTRY LIFE PRESS
GARDEN CITY, N. Y.

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